Until Death do us Part

6

Story:
Hiroshi Takashige

Art:
DOUBLE-S

Until Death do us Part
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THE GIRL STARTS WAILING AND TIPS OUR MEN OFF TO HIS PRESENCE.
ON THE OTHER HAND, HIS DECISION TO REMAIN AFTER BEING SPOTTED...
...IS ADMIRABLY COURA-GEOUS.
IS THAT A SIGN OF HIS CONFIDENCE, OR IS HE JUST CARE-LESS?
WHAT DOES THIS ALL MEAN? ARE YOU REALLY GOING TO TEAM UP WITH HIM?

...
BUT I FIND HIM ENDLESSLY FASCINATING. WHAT IN THE WORLD DOES HE WANT?
OH, HARDLY...
...THAT HE'D LEAVE THE ELEMENT NETWORK?
WHAT CRIME COULD HE WANT TO COMMIT SO BADLY...
...
ANOTHER THING WE'LL LEARN ONCE WE'VE BROUGHT HIM TO HIS KNEES. HA-HA!

...IT'S TIME TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS FACILITY'S STOCKPILE OF WEAPONS.
AND NOW...
IT'S ALL YOURS.

chapter 85

chapter 85

DON'T BOTHER LOOKING BACK. NO ONE'S FOLLOWING US.

NO ONE? YOU SEEM PRETTY CONFIDENT ABOUT THAT...
THE ENEMY'S NOT GOING TO KEEP AN END-LESS SUPPLY OF MEN TO DEFEND SUCH A TINY SPACE.
WHEN THEY COME, THEY'LL COME ALL AT ONCE.
TRICKLING THEM IN BIT BY BIT WOULD JUST BE A WASTE OF MANPOWER.
WHAT ...?
UH...
NOPE...
IF YOU SAY SO...
I ASSUME YOU HAVE SOME KIND OF PLAN FOR THIS FIGHT YOU'RE JUMPING INTO?

THIS HAS BEEN ON MY MIND FOR A WHILE.
IF I CAN'T GET THROUGH THIS NOW, WE HAVE NO FUTURE.
THEN YOU TAKE THE LEAD.
READY YET?
YES ..
...WHO THE HELL DID I GET INVOLVED WITH...?

THIS IS DANGEROUS!
OH SHUT UP I'M NOT MAKING HER DO ANYTHING SHE CAN'T HANDLE
HANG ON!
UH
...
RASKAL
..I'M FINE..
I'VE DONE THIS BEFORE.
I'LL BE FINE.

WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE ...?
タッ (TAK)
WHAT KIND OF PERSONAL MISSION ARE THEY BEARING ON THEIR SHOULDERS?

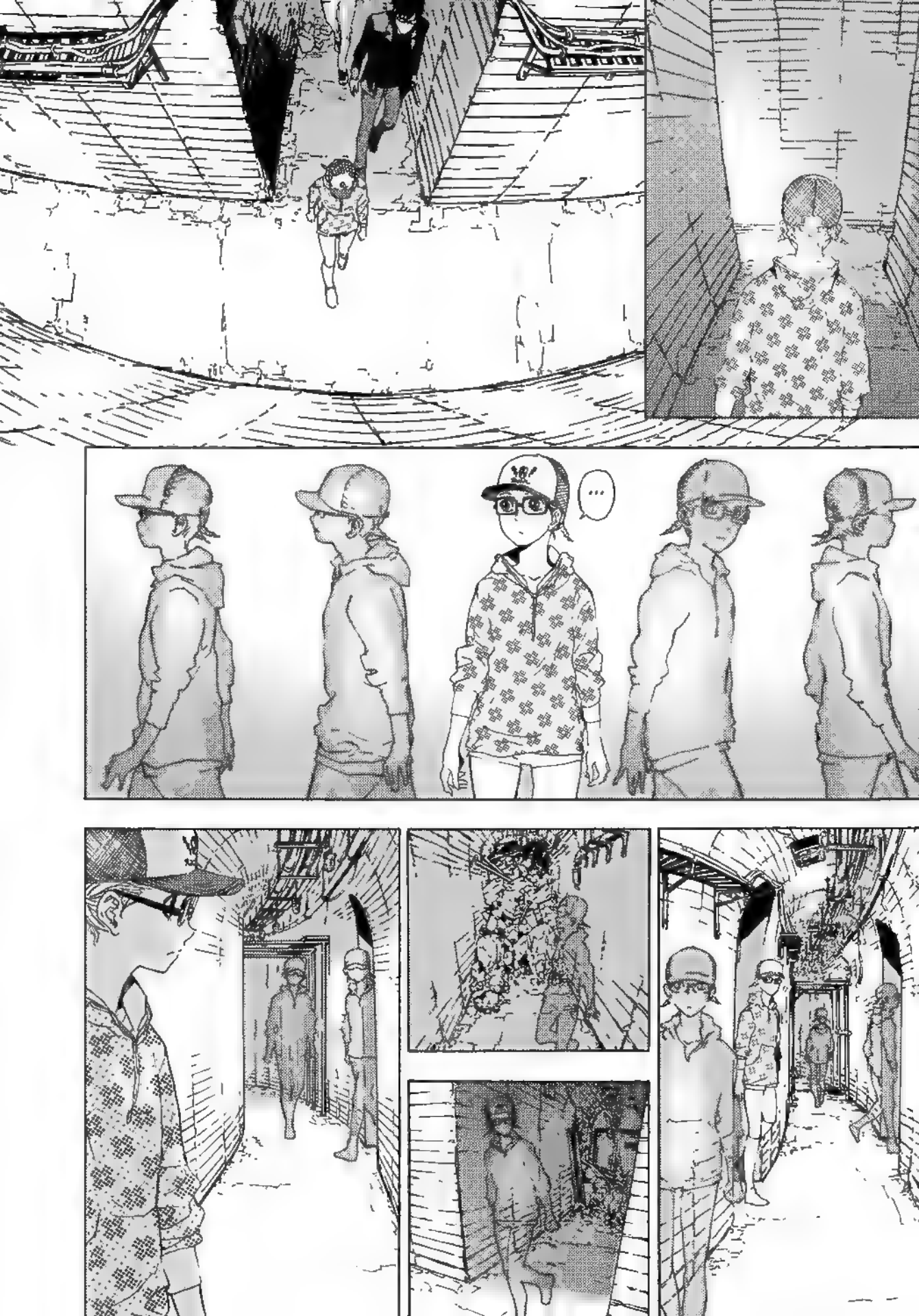
AH—
TOOK US THREE WEEKS, BUT WE FINALLY FOUND ONE.

B-BUT... IT'S SO...
WHAT'S WRONG? YOU KNEW THERE WOULD BE A BEAR HERE— THAT'S WHY YOU GUIDED US TO THIS SPOT.
EEEK!
GAAAA (ROAAAR)
THAT ROAR IS COMING FROM HIGH UP... IT'S A BIG ONE.

DIDN'T YOU REALIZE THAT COMING ACROSS A REAL BEAR WOULD BE A FRIGHTENING EXPERIENCE?
YOU KNOW IT'S THERE, BUT YOU CAN'T MOVE, RIGHT?
BUT YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED TO RETREAT.
STEP FORWARD AND AVOID ITS FIRST ATTACK.
WHAT...?
KEEP CALM AND READ HIS MOVEMENTS!
YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO IT.
THE BEAR'S JUST AS AFRAID OF YOU.

CONQUER YOUR FEAR!
!?
IF YOU SCREW UP, I'M THE ONE WHO GETS EATEN.
グルルルル
GURURURU (ROAAAR)
ゴクッ
GOKU (GULP)
IF YOU CANNOT DO THAT, THEN IT WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO PROTECT YOU IN THE FUTURE!

OKAY..
HERE I GO!



SU (SHHO)
HEY—
CHA (CHAK)
???
WAIT FOR THE SCREAM, COUNT TO THREE, THEN CHARGE.

DADA
(DASH)

BA
(LEAP)
THERE HE IS!
TATA
(RATTA)
TATA

!?
BUA (WHOOSH)
ZUGA (THWACK)

DON'T KILL THEM!
VC

DOSA (WHA...K)
DOSA (THUMP)
KO (TOK)
KO
WHY? WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL...?

MAMORU-SAN!
NOT TO THE RIGHT !!
!?

GAGA (DSH)
GA
GA
GA

Until
Death
do us
Part

chapter 86

GAGAGAGA
(BOOOOM)
MA-
MORU-
SAN
!!

DID THAT GET HIM?
OF COURSE IT DID!
ドスン
DOSUN (THWUD)
?
AH.

MAMORU-SAN!
THEY WERE PACKING A GODDAMN HMG.
GOTTA SAY, THESE ARE SOME PRETTY ODD DEPLOY-MENTS.
HUH? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I MEAN... IT'S A TRAP.

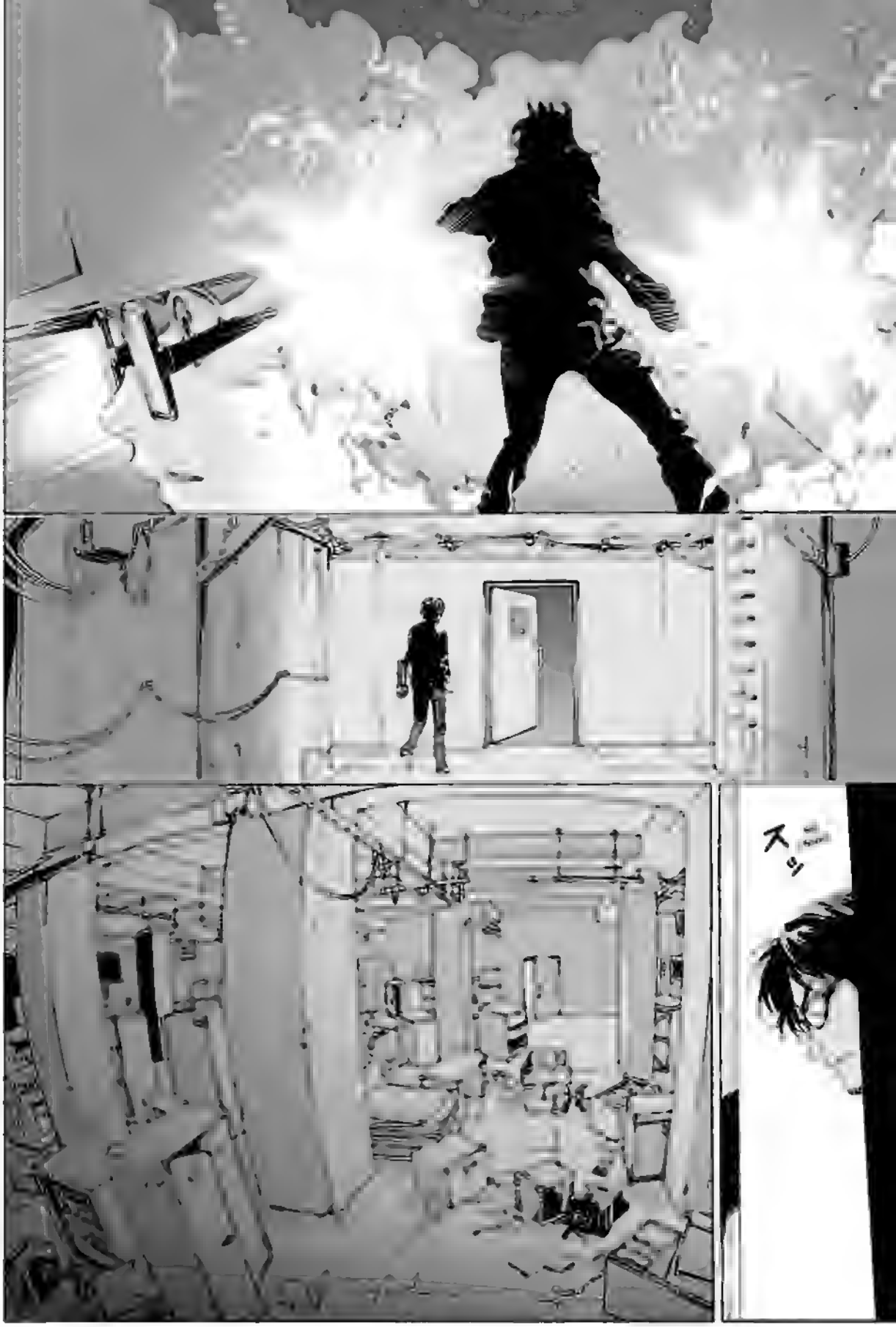
WELL, WHAT'S THE PLAN, THEN?
WHETHER WE AVOID THEM OR PLOW RIGHT THROUGH THEM, THEY WANT TO LURE US INTO THE SAME LOCATION.
THERE'S NO OTHER REASON FOR THEM TO SET UP IN SUCH SCATTERED LOCATIONS.
THAT...
...IS THE TRICKY PART...
?
GUI (TUG)
グイッ

HUH?
HUH?
BUT IT LOOKS LIKE THEY WON'T GIVE US TIME TO THINK ABOUT IT!

...THERE THEY ARE...

ガ
ガ
ガ

HE'S NOT GONNA HEAR YOU, LITTLE LADY.
NO, MAMORU-SAN!
TATA
TATA
NOT THAT WAY!
Later!
MAMORU-SAN!


スッ

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!?
ガ
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ガ
ダダダダ
ガ
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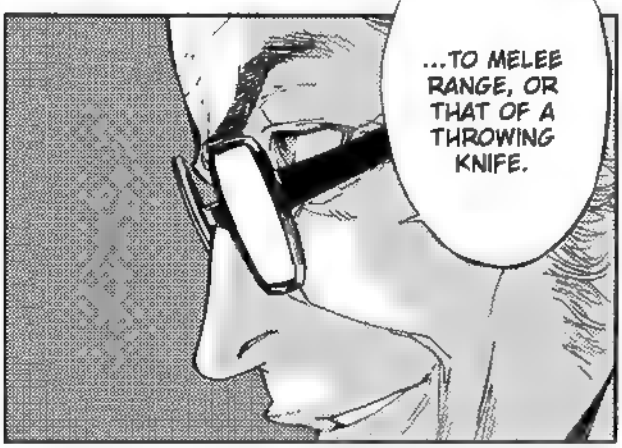
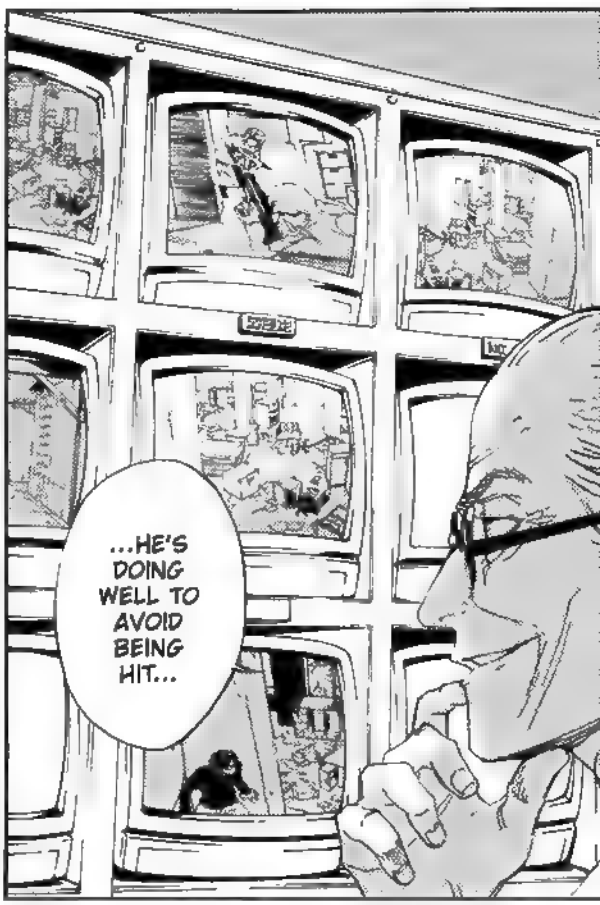
ガ

DOGA CHYAAN
ZUDO CZOMN
A BIT SHALLOW...
THEY'RE USING COVER TO KEEP ME JUST ONE EXTRA STEP AWAY.
TA
GA

TA
TA
TA
TA
TA
TA
TA
TA
TA
TATA
(RATTA)

AND HIS CHOICE OF WEAPONS LIMITS HIM...
...


...TO MELEE RANGE, OR THAT OF A THROWING KNIFE.


...HE'S DOING WELL TO AVOID BEING HIT...

BUT WHEN FIGHTING AT MID- OR LONG-RANGE, HE'LL READILY RETREAT AT ANY TIME.
HE MAKES UP FOR IT AT GREATER RANGES THROUGH INCREDIBLE INSTINCTS AND AN ABILITY TO COVER DISTANCE QUICKLY WHEN STRIKING FORWARD.
IT'S AS THOUGH HE HAS NO INTEREST IN IT.
TA
...AND THE NECESSITY TO SWITCH BETWEEN ATTACK AND RETREAT WILL SAP HIS STAMINA.
SO IF WE MAINTAIN THAT DISTANCE AND KEEP HIM AT BAY, HE'LL GROW FRUS-TRATED...
...AND HIS ABILITY TO FIGHT WILL STEADILY DROP.
ADD TO THAT THE LOSS OF HEARING DUE TO CONSTANT GUNFIRE IN AN ENCLOSED SPACE...

THEY'LL WEAR EACH OTHER DOWN UNTIL FINALLY, THE TOUGHER SIDE WINS OUT.
THAT DOESN'T BODE WELL FOR US.
EXACTLY. HOWEVER, WE DON'T HAVE THE VOLUME OF RESOURCES THAT WE DID LAST TIME.
THOSE THREE ARE THE ONLY ONES WHO CAN CORNER HIM IN THIS SITUATION.
SO YOU SWITCHED UP TACTICS FROM THE PREVIOUS COMBINATION OF SHORT-RANGE BATTLE AND LONG-RANGE SNIPING?
...I SEE...
PERHAPS... BUT I EXPECT THAT HIS SWORD WILL EVENTUALLY TAKE DAMAGE.
AND THAT'S...
HE HAD TO SWITCH IT OUT DURING THE BATTLE WITH FANG.

TSK! I'M SICK OF THIS!!
...WHAT OUR NEXT MOVE IS FOR.
SHUUU (FSHH)
PASHU
PASHU
PASHU
PASHU (PSHT)

CHIK (CHIK)
BA (LEAD)
RAPID
母母母
母母母

TA TA TA TA
DO I TAKE THE BAIT...?
DA (DASH)
THEY MAKE A GOOD TEAM.
Step back!
MEKI
MEKI (CRIK)
!?
TA (CHOP)

A TANK !?

ド"

ド"

ド"

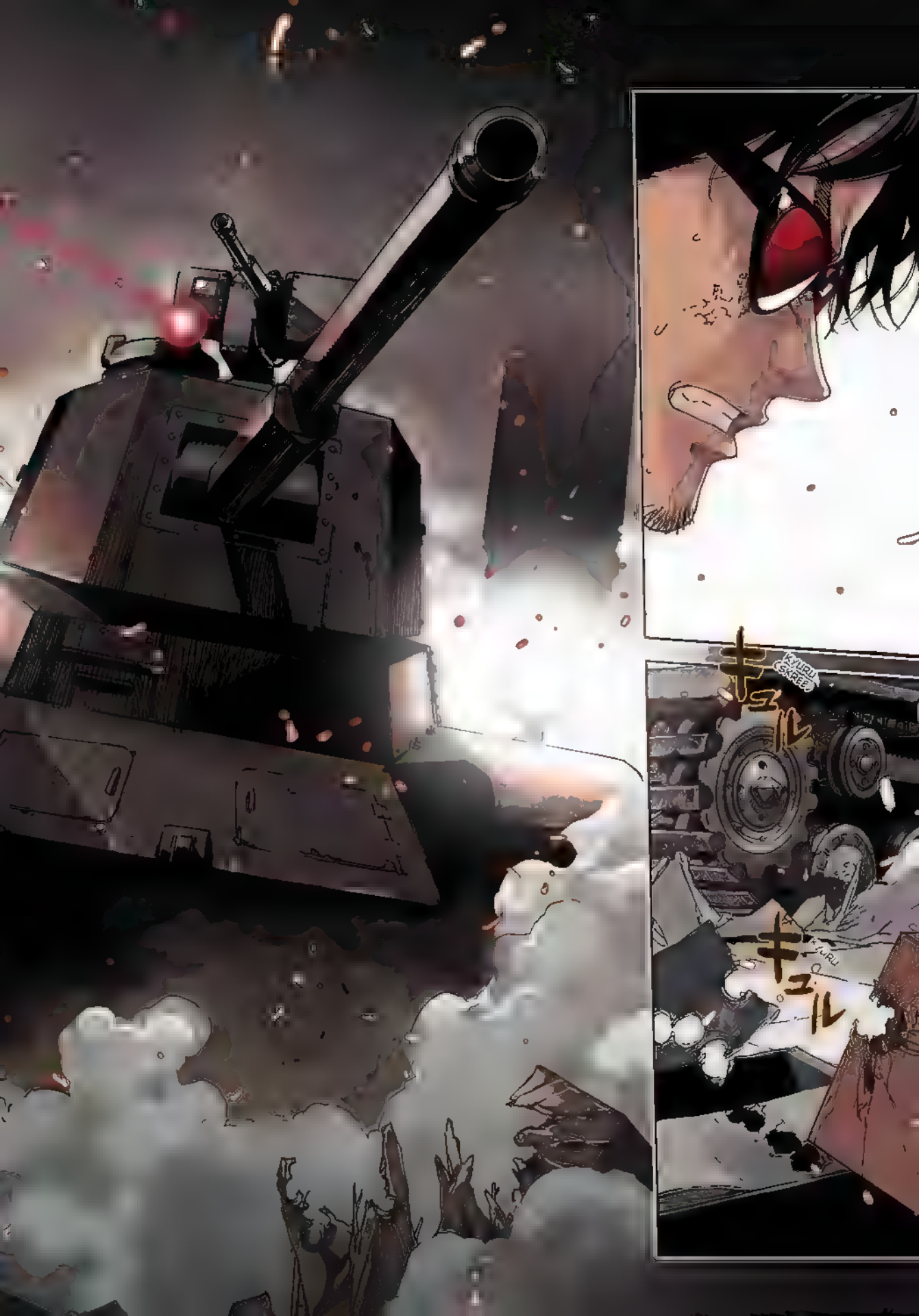
ガ"ガ"ガ"

A TANK !?
ドン (BLAM)
ドン
ドドド
ガガガ
GA (OHH)

GAGA (DRSHHH)
BIRI
BIRI (RATTLE)
GA
EYAAAA!!
ゴゴゴ (RUMBLE)

THEY STACKED MODERN WEAPONS IN THAT IMPERIAL ARMY SHIT-CAN?
AND THOSE THREE ARE STILL HERE... CAN'T GET ANY CLOSER...
キュル
キュル

chapter 87


キュル
KYURU
(SKREE)
キュル
KYURU

chapter 87

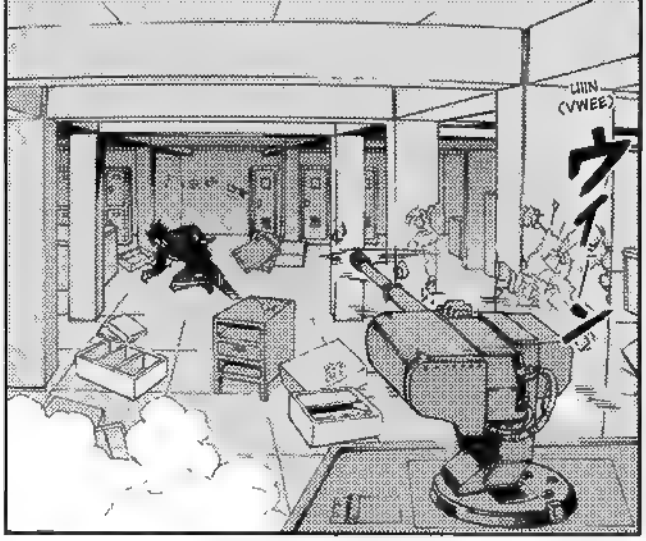
ウィイイ
(VREEE)
ウィイイ
SHIT...
THOSE THREE ARE TOUGH ENOUGH ON THEIR OWN, AND NOW THEY HAVE A FUCKING TANK.
スッ
(SHH)

AND MY CURRENT FIGHTING ABILITY IS AROUND 80%.
GOTTA BUY SOME TIME TO LET MY ARM STRENGTH RETURN.
TSK... GONNA CORNER ME ON THREE SIDES...

WE'RE SURROUNDED BY ENEMIES AT THIS POINT.
...A TANK...? OH MY GOD...
WHA ...?
HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT?
Raskal
THEY'RE NOT COMING FORWARD YET BECAUSE THEY DON'T WANT TO BE IN THE TANK'S CROSSHAIRS, BUT THERE ARE MORE THAN A FEW LURKING AROUND THAT WILL CHARGE IN AT A SINGLE ORDER.
I GUESS I'VE LEARNED TO BE BRAVE...
?
WE'LL NEED YOU LATER, SO DON'T MOVE FROM THIS SPOT, SENJI-SAN.

WH-WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON?
GOT THAT? STAY HERE UNTIL YOU GET THE SIGNAL!
DA DASHU
UH, HELLO !?

Raskal
YOU CAN DO IT, HARUKA!!


(VWEE)
ウィーン

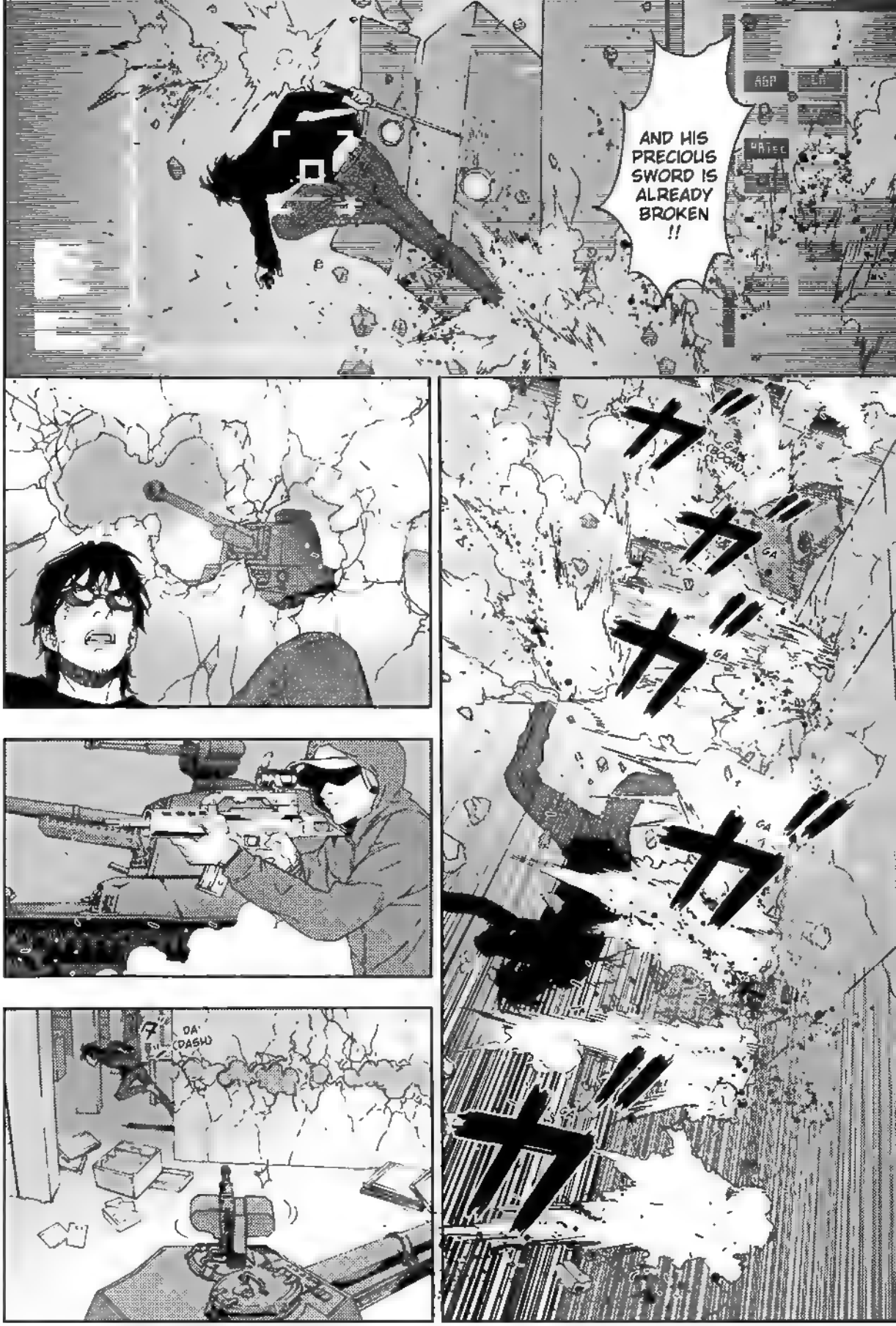
THAT'S RIGHT! RUN, BITCH!

DON'T GET CARRIED AWAY! THE BOSS SAID TO LET THOSE THREE FOREIGNERS GUARD THE TANK!

THE GUN'S ALREADY POWERFUL ENOUGH TO TEAR THE WALLS TO SHREDS!
DO (BLAM)
DO
DO
WE DON'T NEED THE CANNON!

I KNOW, MAN, I KNOW! DON'T USE THE MAIN CANNON EITHER!
THIS IS AN OLD WARTIME PIECE OF SHIT, NOT LIKE THAT FANCY NEW MACHINE GUN!

ガ ガ ガ ガ ガ ガ ガ ガ
GAGA (DSHHH)
GA
ドド
RIGHT! TURN RIGHT!!
AWRIGHT! I DON'T KNOW WHY THE BOSS IS SUCH A WORRYWART.
I DON'T CARE IF IT'S OLD—A HUMAN BEING CAN'T BEAT A DAMN TANK!!
BWA HA HA!
KYURURURU (RATTLE)
キュルル
SHIT!


AND HIS PRECIOUS SWORD IS ALREADY BROKEN !!
DA (DASH)

YOU AIN'T GOIN' NO-WHERE !!
GET 'IM!!
ドド
ガラ
ガラ
キュル

IS THAT A TYPE-3 CHI-NU? WITH REINFORCED ARMOR AND A MODERN HEAVY MACHINE GUN, NO LESS.
IT MIGHT BE AN OLD MODEL, BUT THAT'S A DEADLY MACHINE...
AND THE WEAK ARMOR ON THE SIDES IS COVERED BY THEIR EXPERT DEFENSIVE FORMATION.
WHAT DOES BLADE DO, NOW THAT HE'S LOST HIS TRUMP CARD?

HELP ME!

...
PLEASE, HELP US.
YOU'RE THE ONE.. WHO WAS FOLLOWING US, AREN'T YOU?
NOT HIS COMBAT SUPPORT.
I UNDER-STAND YOUR CONCERNS, BUT MY DUTY IS YOUR PROTECTION
AND THAT'S ALL YOU WANT?
OH...?
ACTUALLY...ALL I NEED IS FOR YOU TO TELL US WHAT TO DO.

MORE THAN THAT
BECAUSE MAMORU SAN WILL NOT LOSE!
WHEN THE ENEMY IS POWERFUL
THE STRONGER THEY ARE THE MORE MAMORU SAN SWINGS HIS SWORD WITH INTENTION TO KILL
SO

ドドド

THIS WAY!
!!

HE JUMPED BEHIND THE WALL!
AFTER HIM!

SMALL-MINDED IDIOTS, GETTING CARRIED AWAY.
WE CAN'T GUARD THE SIDES IN THE HALLWAY— THERE'S NOT ENOUGH ROOM. GOT-TA COVER IT FROM THE REAR.
NO, STOP!
キュル
KYURU
キュル
KYURU
キュル
KYURU
FINE, THEN!
PULL BACK AND GET SOME MOMENTUM THIS TIME!
I-I'M STUCK! I CAN'T MOVE!

ヒュン
HYUN (SWISH)
GAGAGA (GRUMM)
キュルル
KYURU
KYURU (RATTLE)
KIN (TING)
AIM FOR THAT!
!?

I'M GONNA KILL 'IM!
AAAH!
AAAH!
AA!
AAA AAHH!

AAAAAGH!!

(USED SWORD)
ズボッ
AARRGH!!
WHAT HAPPENED !?
AAGH !!

I DON'T HAVE TO HOLD BACK AGAINST THE LIKES OF YOU!
COME AT ME WITH THAT IN MIND!

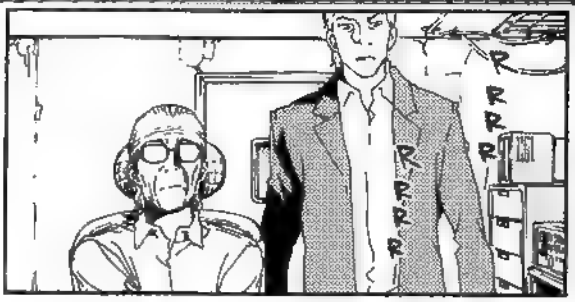
chapter 88

LOOKS LIKE OUR IDIOTS IN THE TANK MANAGED TO MAKE THEMSELVES USELESS.
EVEN IF THE TANK HADN'T COINCIDENTALLY BROKEN HIS SWORD, IT WOULDN'T HAVE STOPPED HIM.
IN FACT, IT WAS IMPRESSIVE THAT THEY MANAGED TO SLOW HIM DOWN AT ALL.
NO WORRIES. THAT WASN'T A MODERN MODEL. IT'S A RELIC OF WORLD WAR II THAT WAS BURIED IN THIS UNDER-GROUND FORT.
JUST A TIME-KILLING DIVERSION.

HE HAS EVEN MORE STAGES PLANNED OUT?
AND WE'VE BEEN UNDER ASSAULT FROM THAT MANIAC WITHOUT ANY PREPA-RATIONS.
BUT I HOPE THAT OUR NEXT MOVE IS MORE FRUITFUL.
THIS IS CLEARLY NOT A MAN TO BE TOYED WITH...
I'M IMPRESSED THAT HE MANAGED TO SLIP IN WITH-OUT BEING CAUGHT BY ANY OF THE CAMERAS.
BUT IT TURNS OUT...THERE'S ONE MORE RAT IN THE BUNCH...

...SENJI!?

!?
W-WAIT A SECOND! IS THAT—


RRRR
RRRR

IS HE GUIDING THEM THROUGH THE FACILITY ...?

WHAT IS IT!?

THAT WAS A REPORT FROM THE GROUP I SENT TO ATTACK OUR TARGETS FROM BEHIND BY FOLLOWING THEM INSIDE, JUST IN CASE.
OF COURSE! SENJI!
THE BASEMENT OF THE OLD BUILDING? I HID THE KEY—
THE PLACE IS ALL BUGGED OUT WITH TRAPS. NO WAY TO CHARGE IN.
REAL THOROUGH STUFF.

WHEN OUR BUILDING WAS ATTACKED THE OTHER DAY...
...
...THERE WAS ONE MORE PERSON WHO SET BOMBS AND RODE A MOTORCYCLE THROUGH THE PLACE.
SEEMS LIKE THIS IS OUR MAN.

I'M GOING TO LEAVE TWO MEN WITH WEAPONS BEHIND AND CUT OFF THEIR ESCAPE ROUTE.
SHOULDA KNOWN ...
PLEASE DO.
WE DON'T NEED ANY MORE UNWANTED VISITORS.
KATA (RATTLE)
KATA
IF YOU'D STAYED QUIET IN THE HOSPITAL, I MIGHT HAVE KEPT YOU AROUND AS A FIGUREHEAD!
DAMN MEDDLING OLD BOSS ...

ガ
ドゴ
ガ
ガ
ウィ

DOGO (BOOM)
SHIT! I CAN'T SEE ANY-THING!!
BISHI
BISHI (CRACK)
BISHI
DA (DASH)
GARA (KSHUNK)

ガラガラ
(RUMBLE)

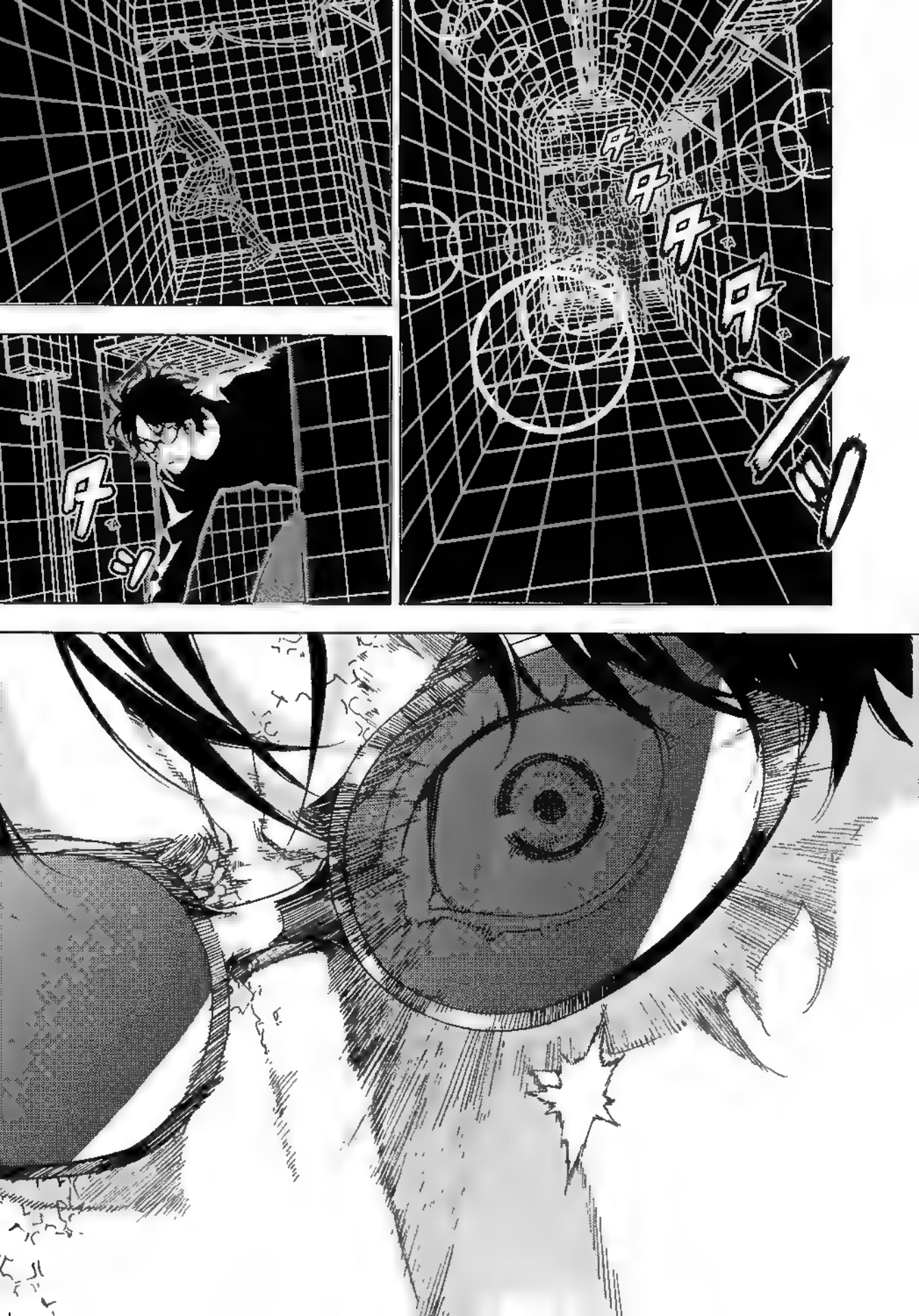
AAAH !!
BARA (CLUNK)
BUSHUU (BSHHT)
TA (TEK)
HMPH... MY REACH WASN'T QUITE LONG ENOUGH WITH THE BROKEN BLADE...
BA (LEAP)

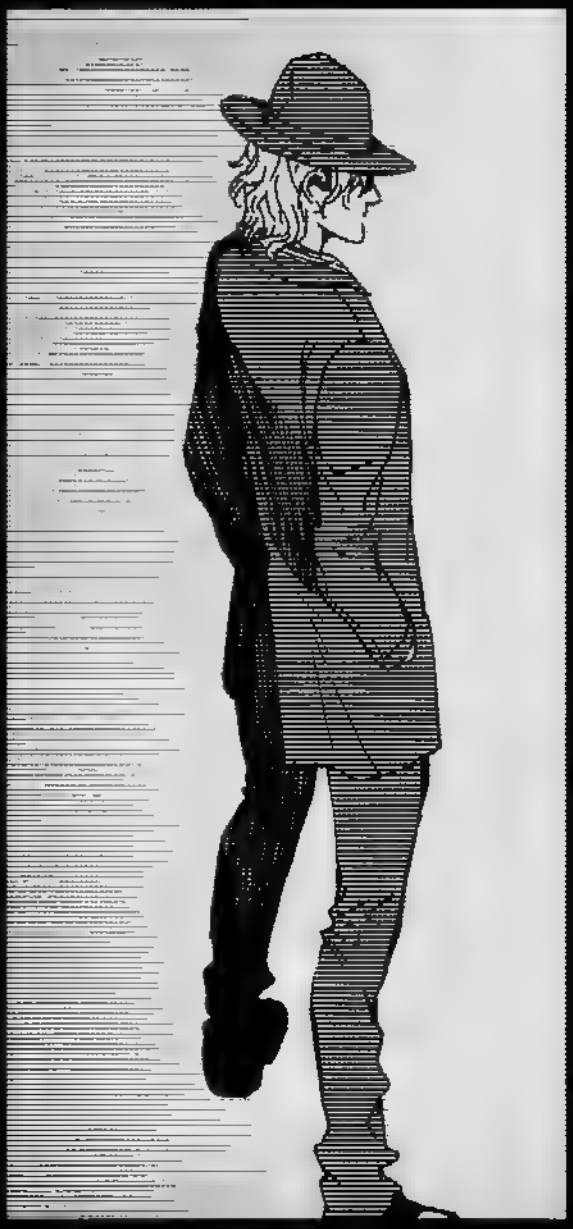
SHIT!
CHA (CHAK)

JUST ONE MORE MAN, AND WE'D HAVE WRAPPED THIS UP AGES AGO!
SON OF A BITCH!
...
THAT FORMATION NEEDS AT LEAST THREE MEN COVERING EACH OTHERS' POSITIONS, OR ELSE IT DOESN'T WORK.
LOOKS LIKE THEY'VE SEEN THROUGH OUR STRATEGY.

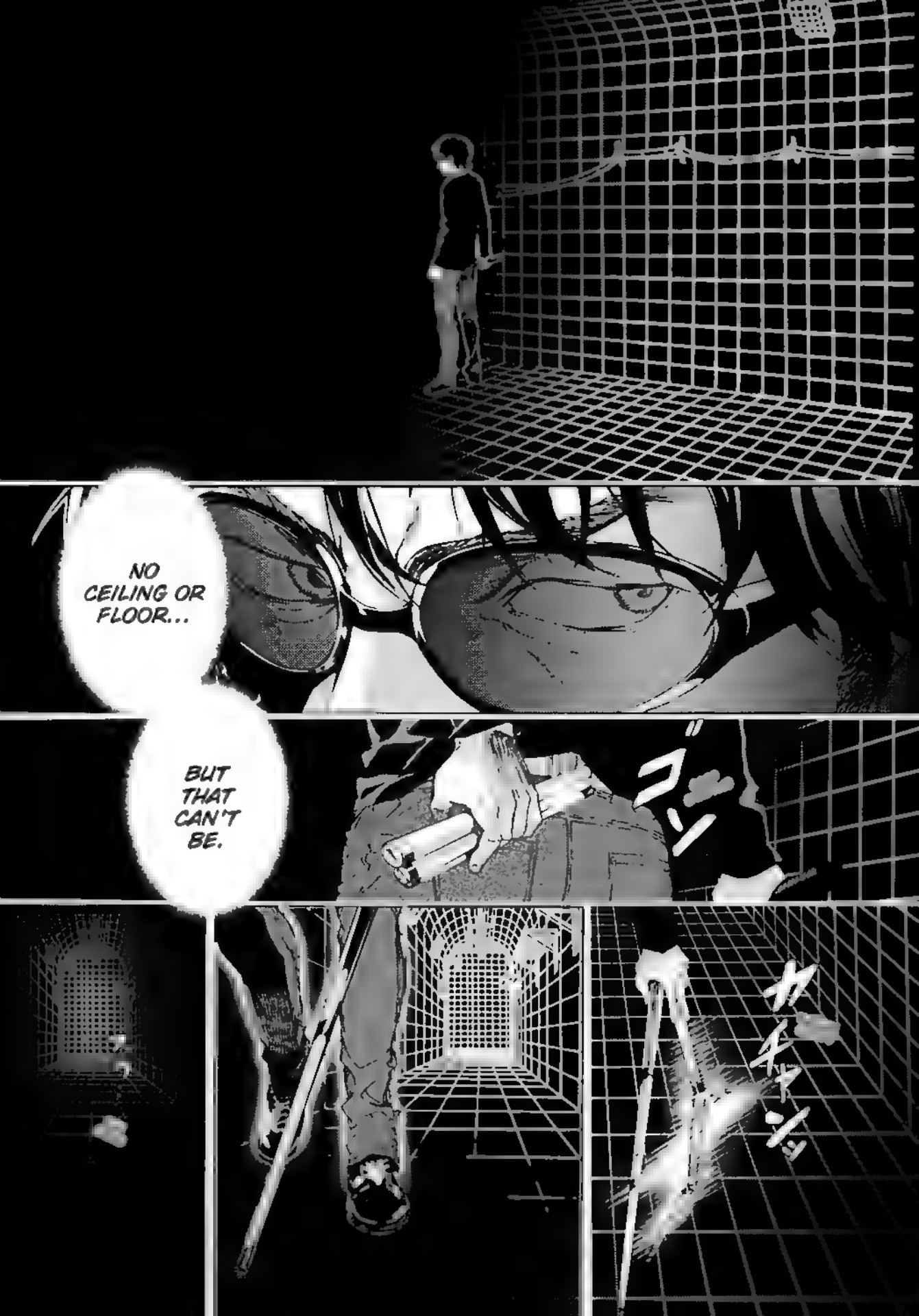
INVITE HIM INTO THE NEXT ROOM.
パチ
MIC
ガガッ
ナナナッ

YOU SURE ABOUT THIS?
IT'S PROBABLY A TRAP
AH... WELL, LET'S SEE HOW HE DOES
...
Raskal
IT'S FINE.





Until
Death
do us
Part


NO CEILING OR FLOOR...
BUT THAT CAN'T BE.
コン
カチャン

chapter 89

HOLDING THEIR BREATH, FINGERS ON THE TRIGGER.
...I CAN TELL THEY'RE THERE.

IF WE PLACE THESE IN ALL FOUR CORNERS OF THE ROOM, IT SHOULD CREATE AN ANECHOIC CHAMBER.
GOTO (THUNK)
SO YOU SEE, THESE SOUND CANCELERS WILL ABSORB AND NEUTRALIZE ALL SOUND IN THE AREA.
THIS SHOULD ESSENTIALLY RENDER THE SAMURAI'S ULTRASONIC ECHO VISION DEVICE UTTERLY USE-LESS.
BUT DON'T ASSUME HE'LL BE ENTIRELY HELPLESS.
IT'S ONE OF THE REASONS HE HAD SO MUCH TROUBLE WITH FANG'S DRONES.

IN FACT, IT MIGHT BE TO OUR ADVANTAGE TO GIVE UP ON GUNS AND TAKE HIM DOWN WITH A COMBINATION OF CLOSE RANGE ATTACKS.
THE INSTINCTS HE USED TO AVOID YOUR SNIPING ARE THE REAL DEAL.
I'LL LEAVE THE MEANS TO YOUR DISCRETION.

ONE OF THEM DROPPED HIS GUN ...?
THEY'RE SPLIT-TING LEFT AND RIGHT, AND THE ONE WHO DROPPED THE GUN IS APPROACH-ING...
THEY WANT ...
CHANGED OUT HIS EMPTY MAGAZINE FOR A NEW ONE
THE OTHER ONE'S PROB-ABLY JUST...

...A CLOSE RANGE FIGHT WHERE THEY CAN HIT ME WHEN I DODGE!?

TA
(TEK)
TA
GROAA!!
HYU
(SWISH)
BUO
(WHOOSH)

!?
BA (LEAP)
GORO
MAMORU-SAN...
WHAT CAN HE DO WHEN HE CAN'T SEE IT?

Rascal
ТА (ТЕК)

AAAAHHH!

WHA ...?
...
I SEE, I SEE... HIS EVERY SENSE ASIDE FROM SIGHT IS SO INCREDIBLY SHARP THAT HE CAN PICK UP ON EVEN THE SMALLEST DETAIL. NOT ONLY THAT, HE CUT DOWN THE MORE POWERFUL FOES FIRST, JUST AS HE DID IN THE PREVIOUS BATTLE OF ATTRITION.
HE HAS NO WEAK-NESS!

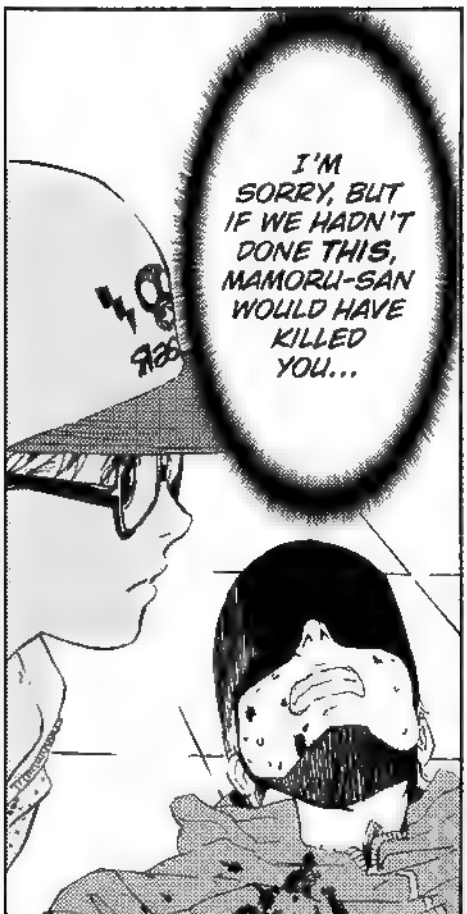
PULL BACK.
KACHI (CLICK)
WHAT DOES THIS MEAN !?
WHY THAT REACTION? WHY DID THE ENEMY PULL BACK?
THEY'RE COMING FROM BEHIND.

GAGAGA (DSHH)
OVER THERE!
GET 'EM!
DOGA (STOMP)
DOGA
TATA (RATTA)
TA
TA
I'LL HANDLE THEM.
SELFISH BASTARD!
GU (PUSH)
MY VOICE JUST VANISHED!? WHAT'S GOING ON?

NO KILLING ...

DODODON (BABOOM)

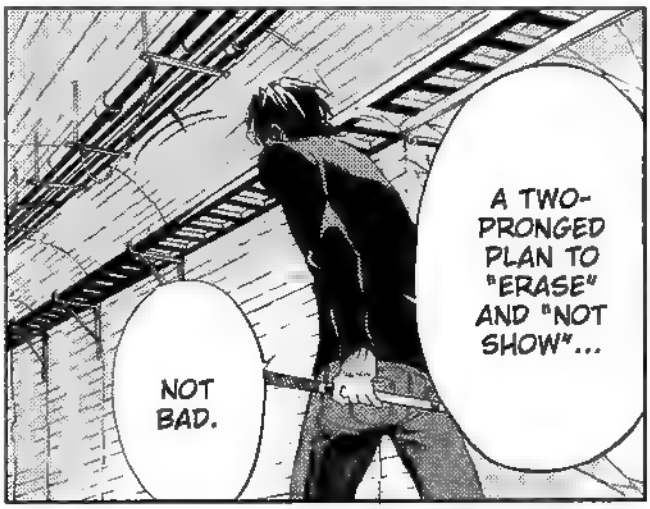
AAAH!
UNNG ...

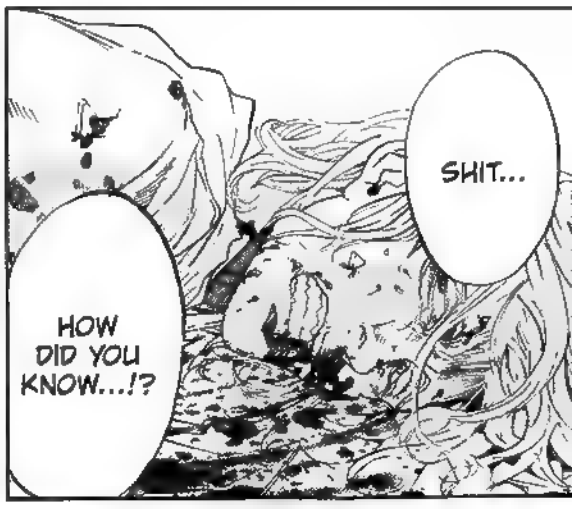

I'M SORRY, BUT IF WE HADN'T DONE THIS, MAMORU-SAN WOULD HAVE KILLED YOU...

SONAR system
normal
VISION'S BACK...
コッ
コッ
BUT IT'S NOT RIGHT...
コッ
...SOME-THING'S OFF...
コッ

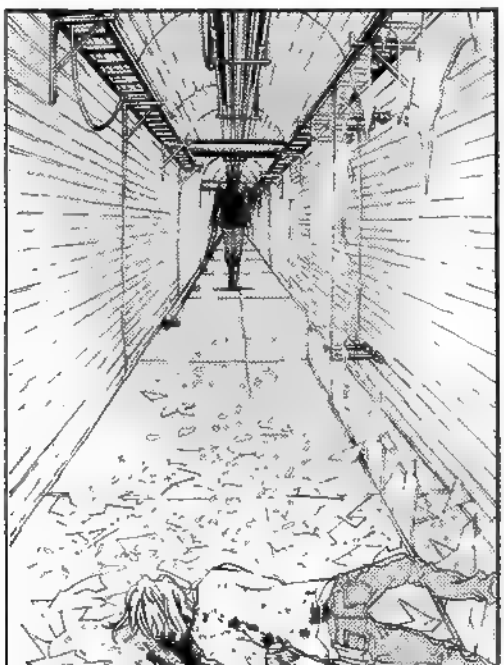
コッ
コッ
コッ
GU
(TUG)
グッ
GU
グッ

DOSA (THUDD)
AAAGHH!!
KACHA (CLICK)
GASHAA (CRASH)
HMPH...TOO SHALLOW AGAIN...


NOT BAD.
A TWO-PRONGED PLAN TO "ERASE" AND "NOT SHOW"...


HOW DID YOU KNOW...!?
SHIT...

...GOD... DAMMIT...



BUT UNLESS YOU MANAGE TO STIFLE YOUR MURDEROUS INTENT, ALL YOUR TRICKS WOULDN'T FOOL A CHILD.

Until
Death
do us
Part

chapter 90

WHAT... AM I...?
!!

OH, RIGHT ...
SENSEI ATTACKED ME...
YAAAAH!!
GASHII (KSHIING)
GA (WHAA)
GA
GA
ZAZAZA (ZSHH)

THIS IS A LIFE-AND-DEATH BATTLE...
IT'S TAKING ALL MY ABILITY JUST TO THINK, MOVE, AND REACT.
BI (BSHH)
KA (THWAK)
GAGA (CRAKK)
HE'S DEAD SERIOUS ...

DON'T THINK! MOVE WITH YOUR INSTINCTS !!

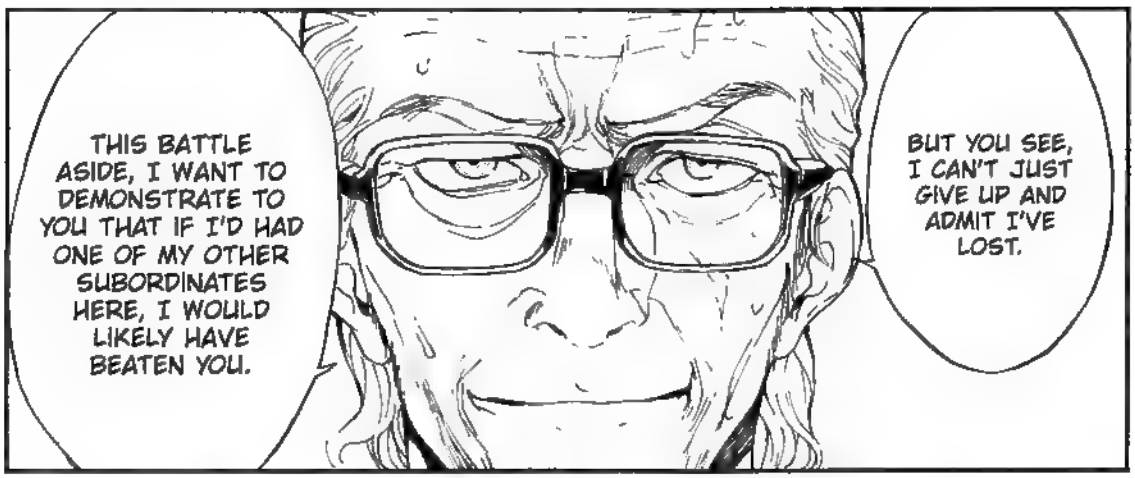
SENSEI!

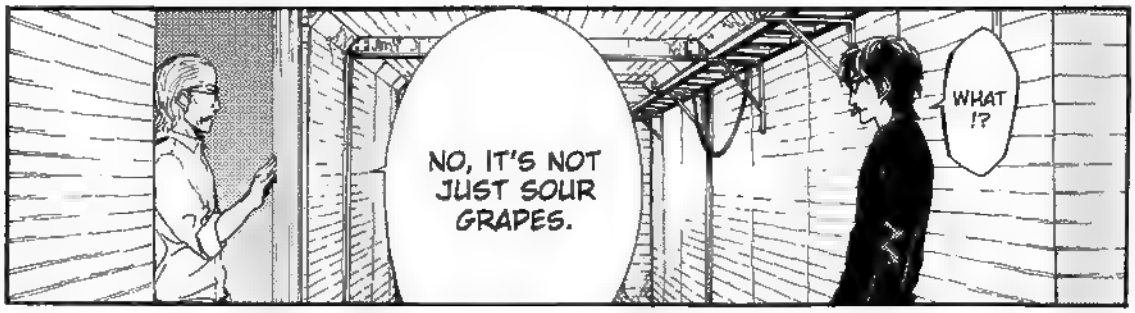
PAN (SMACK)
!?
WHAT'S WITH THAT SMILE ON YOUR FACE...?
UGH ...
THAT SETTLES YOUR FUTURE PATH.
NOW LIVE YOUR LIFE AND SEE THAT PATH TO ITS END.

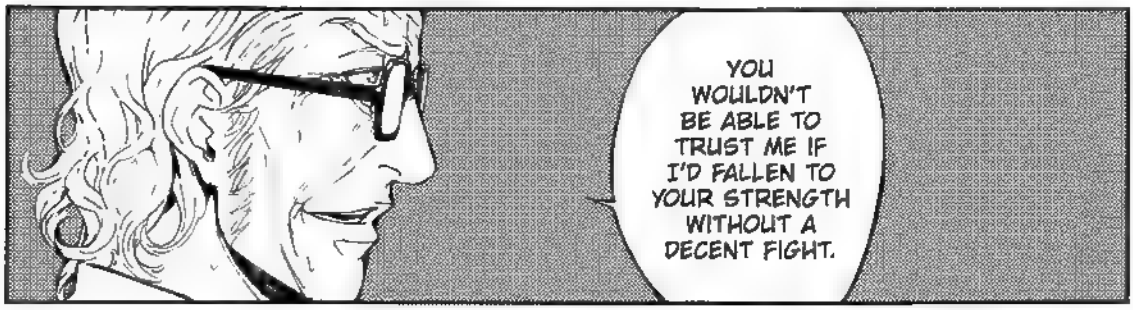
...
WHAT...
AM I...?

KO (TOK)
KO
DONE WITH ALL THE TRICKS?

NAH, I JUST PICKED THE DIRECTION THAT HAD THE MOST PROTECTION.
WHERE'S KOMURA? WE HAVE TO SETTLE SOMETHING
JUST A MINUTE.
THERE'S A THING OR TWO I WANT TO ASK YOU FIRST
ARE YOU BUYING TIME?
EXACTLY.
I'M IMPRESSED THAT YOU FOUND ME HERE.


THIS BATTLE ASIDE, I WANT TO DEMONSTRATE TO YOU THAT IF I'D HAD ONE OF MY OTHER SUBORDINATES HERE, I WOULD LIKELY HAVE BEATEN YOU.
BUT YOU SEE, I CAN'T JUST GIVE UP AND ADMIT I'VE LOST.


NO, IT'S NOT JUST SOUR GRAPES.
WHAT!?

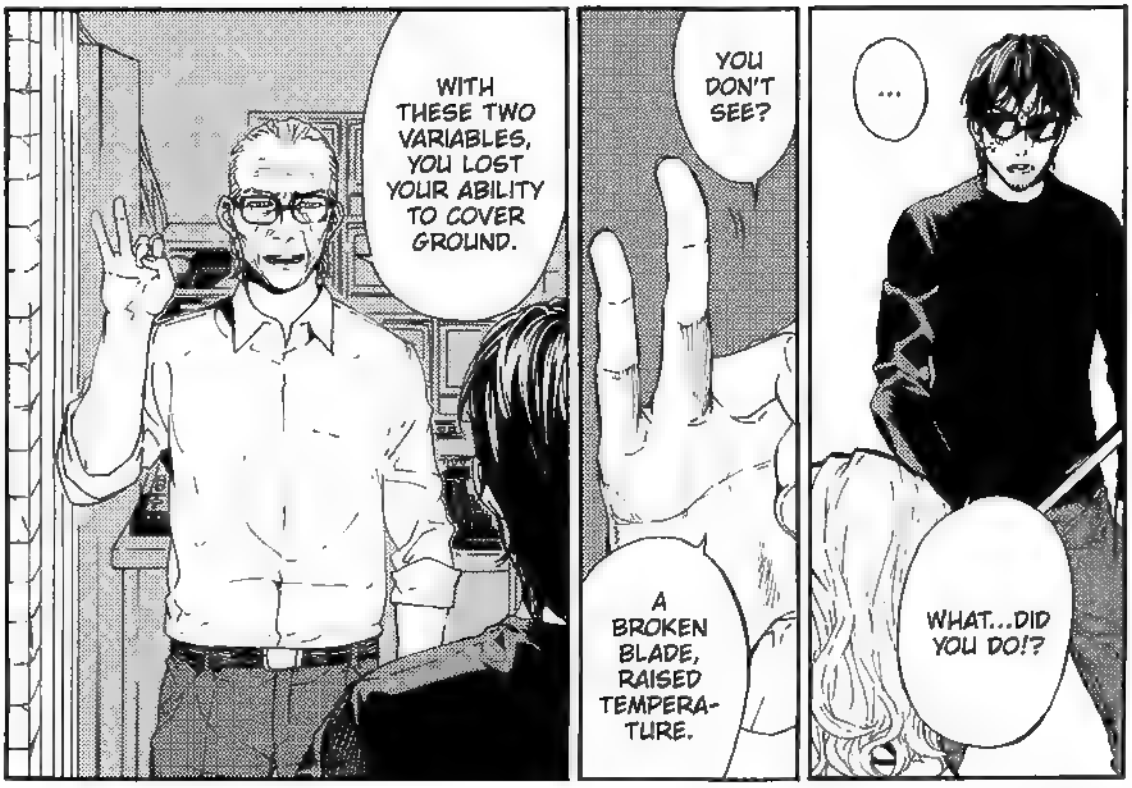

YOU WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO TRUST ME IF I'D FALLEN TO YOUR STRENGTH WITHOUT A DECENT FIGHT.

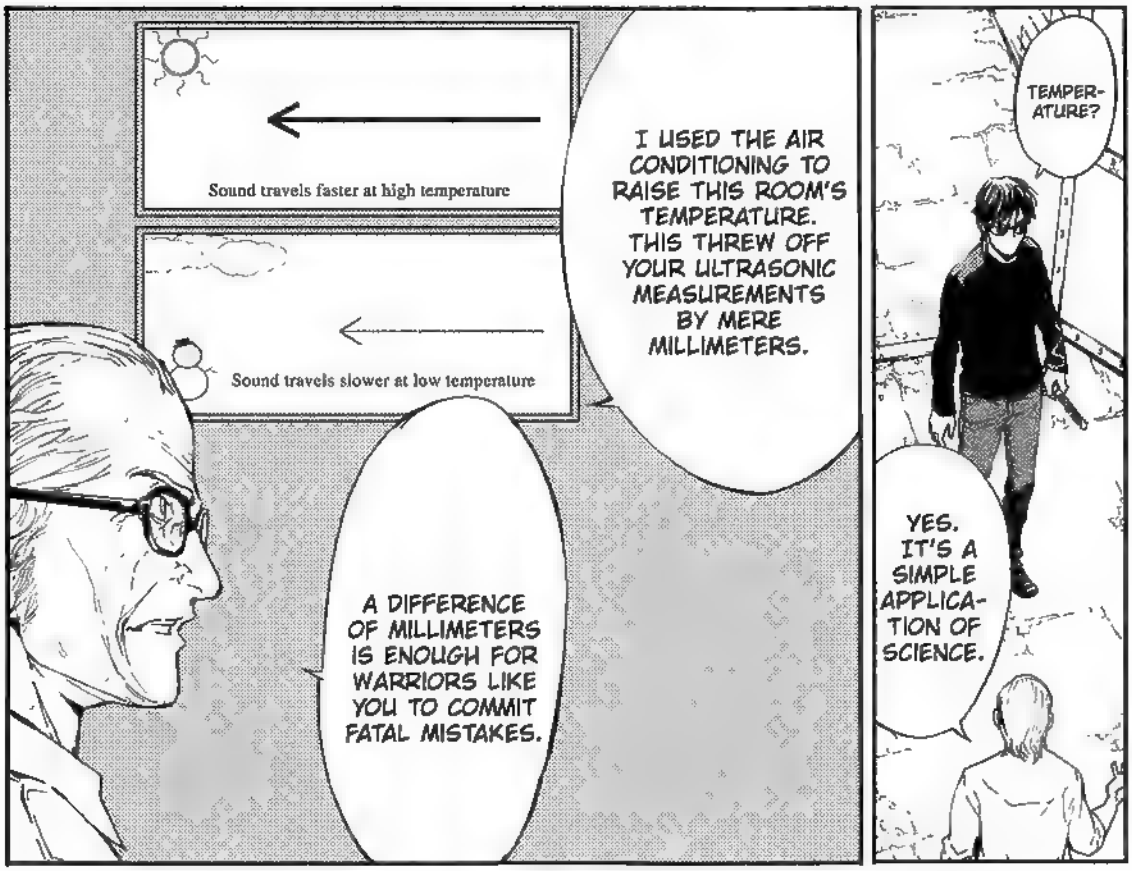
...WHAT MORE COULD HE POSSIBLY HAVE UP HIS SLEEVE ...?
...

JUST LIKE I FIRST SENSED, THERE ARE NO SIGNS OF ANYONE ASIDE FROM HIM.
AND NO SIGNS OF ANY OTHER TRAPS OR EQUIPMENT.
BUT HE'S NOT THE TYPE OF MAN TO MAKE MEANING-LESS BLUFFS ...
...
I WAS HOPING THIS WOULD HAPPEN A BIT LATER, BUT I'LL HAVE TO SETTLE FOR THIS.
I'LL TELL YOU WHAT YOU WANT TO KNOW IF YOU CUT ME DOWN.

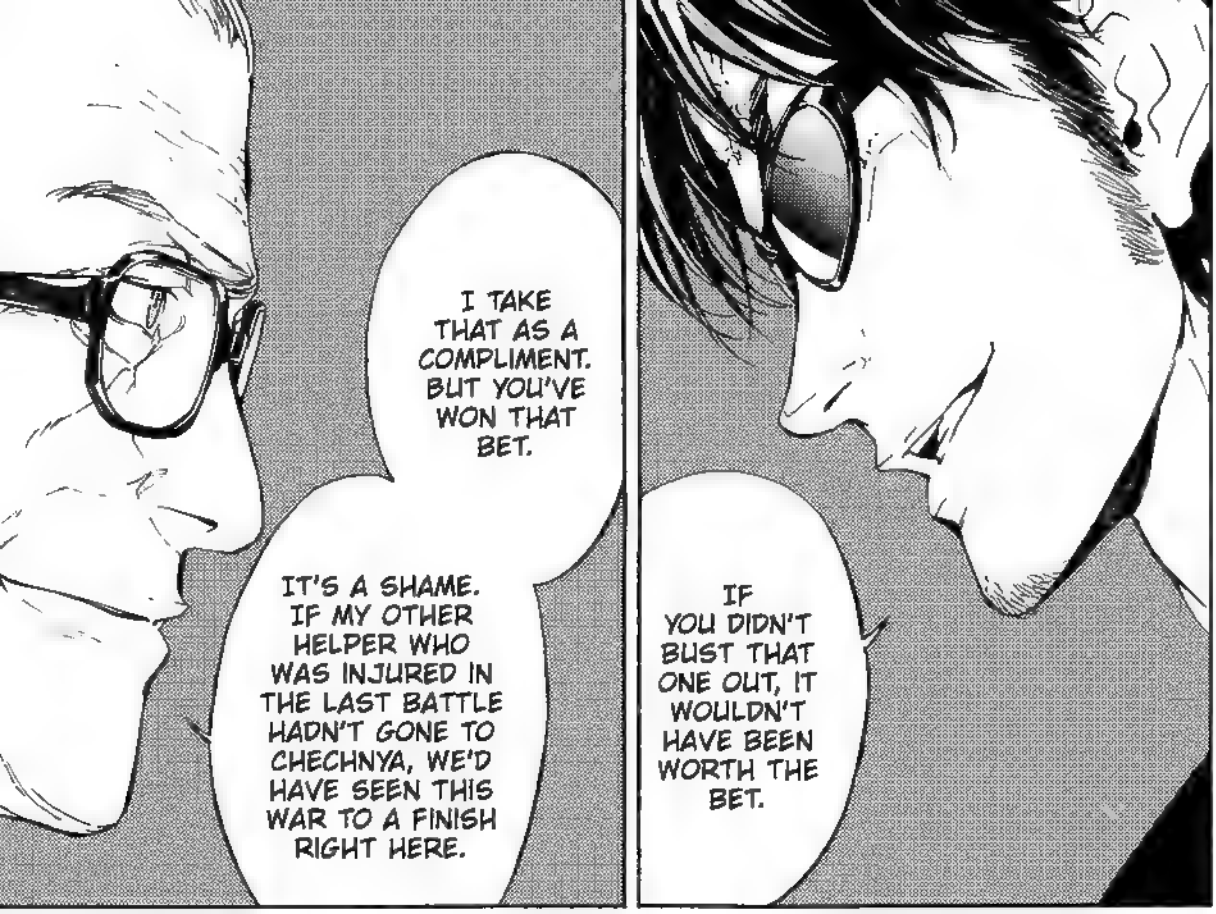
IF YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING TO GET OUT OF THIS WITHOUT A SCRATCH, YOU'RE SORELY MISTAKEN.
...
AND I WILL CONCEDE YOUR VICTORY.
DO IT, THEN.
(WHOOSH)
ONE

BUO
(WHOOSH)
!?


WITH THESE TWO VARIABLES, YOU LOST YOUR ABILITY TO COVER GROUND.
YOU DON'T SEE?
A BROKEN BLADE, RAISED TEMPERA-TURE.
...
WHAT...DID YOU DO!?


Sound travels faster at high temperature
Sound travels slower at low temperature
I USED THE AIR CONDITIONING TO RAISE THIS ROOM'S TEMPERATURE. THIS THREW OFF YOUR ULTRASONIC MEASUREMENTS BY MERE MILLIMETERS.
A DIFFERENCE OF MILLIMETERS IS ENOUGH FOR WARRIORS LIKE YOU TO COMMIT FATAL MISTAKES.
TEMPER-ATURE?
YES. IT'S A SIMPLE APPLICA-TION OF SCIENCE.

DESPITE YOUR UNCANNY ABILITY TO SENSE THINGS, YOU LOSE THAT ADVANTAGE WHEN YOUR VISUAL INFORMATION IS MANIPULATED.
YOU GOT ME THERE.
I SEE. YOU MAKE IT LOOK LIKE A TWO-LAYER TRICK, BUT IN THE END, IT'S A THREE-LAYER FAKE USING THE SIMPLEST TRICK OF ALL: THROWING OFF MY INTERVAL.
AND AT YOUR CURRENT VISUAL FIDELITY, YOU CAN'T SEE MY SWEAT.
WITHOUT THE LINK TO YOUR SUPPORT CAR, YOU HAVE NO ALLY TO CORRECT IT FOR YOU.
YOU REALLY PICKED OUT MY WEAKNESS, DIDN'T YOU?
HEH! GOTCHA.


I TAKE THAT AS A COMPLIMENT. BUT YOU'VE WON THAT BET.
IT'S A SHAME. IF MY OTHER HELPER WHO WAS INJURED IN THE LAST BATTLE HADN'T GONE TO CHECHNYA, WE'D HAVE SEEN THIS WAR TO A FINISH RIGHT HERE.
IF YOU DIDN'T BUST THAT ONE OUT, IT WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN WORTH THE BET.

IT WAS QUITE A LOT OF WORK.
CHECHNYA, HUH? YOU'RE EVEN DOING YOUR HOME-WORK THERE?
FIRST IS HOW YOU WERE ABLE TO GET HERE UNHARMED.
AND NOW IT'S MY TURN TO ASK THE QUESTIONS.

IF MY STRATEGY WAS CORRECT, YOUR HEARING SHOULD BE ENTIRELY SHOT BY NOW.
YOU'VE BEEN TRAPPED IN A SMALL, ENCLOSED SPACE WITH CONSTANT FIREARM AND MACHINE GUN FIRE. THIS SHOULD HAVE CAUSED ENOUGH DAMAGE TO YOUR EARS THAT YOU COULD BARELY WALK STRAIGHT.
YOU PROBABLY THOUGHT YOU COULD SAP MY ABILITY TO FIGHT OVER TIME. YOU THOUGHT WRONG.

EAR-PLUGS?
Raskal
THAT'S ALL IT WAS.
YOU OVERLOOKED HARUKA'S POWER. YOU DIDN'T TAKE IT INTO ACCOUNT.
DESPITE THAT, I SEEM TO HAVE SHATTERED YOUR WEAP-ON FAIRLY EASILY.
...
BUT I DID.
I'LL ADMIT THAT I UNDERESTIMATED HER INPUT, HOWEVER. I JUST HAVE NO EXPERIENCE WITH FORESIGHT.

IF YOU DON'T WANT TO BE DETECTED, YOU NEED TO FLOAT IN THE AIR RATHER THAN KEEP YOUR FEET ON THE GROUND.
HOW DID YOU GET PAST MY SOUND CANCEL-ERS?
NEXT...
...
THAT'S ENOUGH QUES-TIONS.
WHERE'S KOMURA!?

Until
Death
do us
Part

?
PARA (SPRINKLE)
パラ
PARA
パラ
!?
WH-WHAT HAP-PENED !?
DOGAA (DBOOM)
AAAH !!

HEH HEH.
GYUGO GOOM!

chapter 91

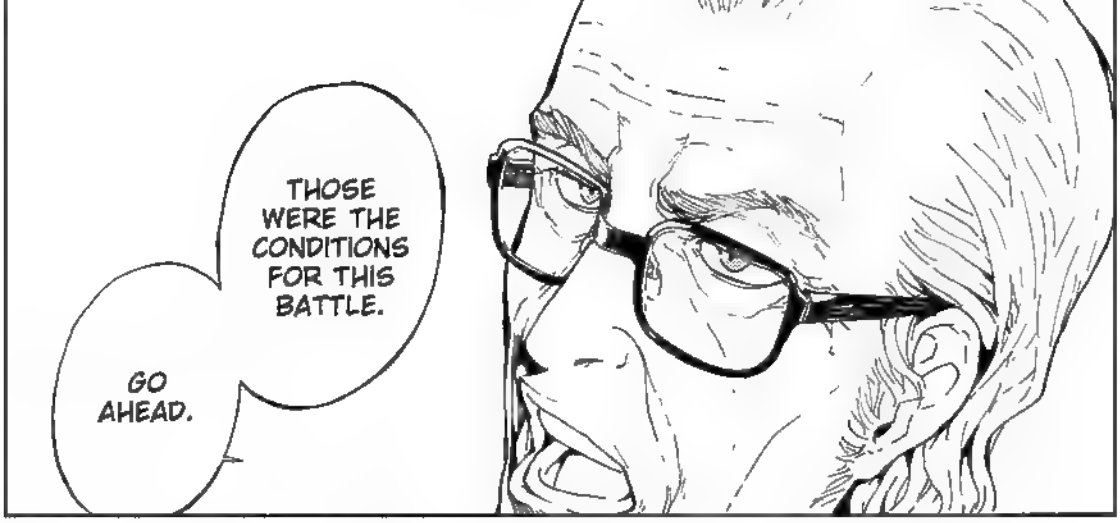
ALL DONE.

BUT THE HALLWAY'S PACKED WITH TRAPS.

LOOKS LIKE THE PATH IS CLEAR.
PYRO SAID THEY'RE JUST FOR SHOW.
Ahh...
DON'T WORRY, THEY'RE ALL BLANKS.

THANKS.
カチャ
YOU SWEAR HE'S BACK HERE?
チャッ
…

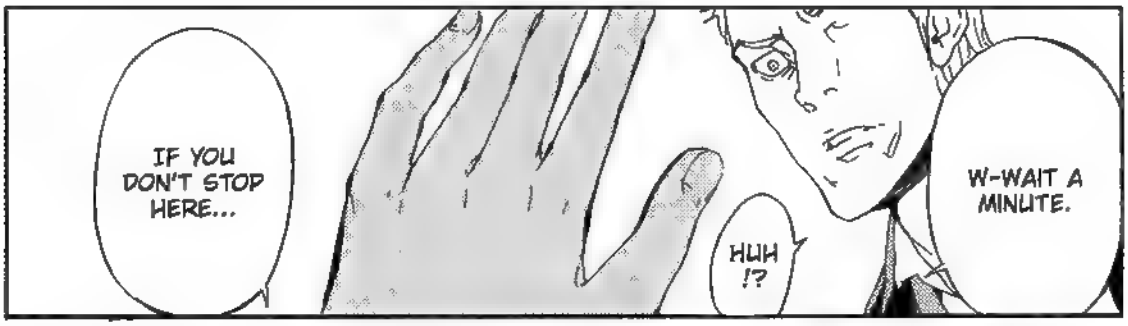
NO SIGN OF HIM.
GARA (KSHUNK)
GARA
TSK! I WANTED TO FINISH ALL OF THIS RIGHT HERE.
HEH... I SUPPOSE KOMURA MUST HAVE FLOWN THE COOP.
I'M IMPRESSED AT HIS UTTER INDIFFERENCE TO PERSONAL DIGNITY.
BAGUA (CRACK)
BEFORE I CHASE HIM DOWN...
...I WANT TO TALK ABOUT WHAT COMES NEXT.


THOSE WERE THE CONDITIONS FOR THIS BATTLE.
GO AHEAD.

...

THE GUY'S A FUCKING MONSTER.
BUT I'M GONNA REGROUP, AND I'M GONNA GET HIM FOR GOOD.
DADA (DASH)

ARE YOU... KOMURA-SAN?
!?
YOU WANT SOME-THING?
I'M IN A HURRY.
YOU CAN SEE THE FUTURE...
AHH, RIGHT ...


IF YOU DON'T STOP HERE...
HUH !?
W-WAIT A MINUTE.

...MAMORU-SAN WILL KILL YOU.

GIVE IT A REST, LITTLE MISSY! DON'T WORRY, I CAN TAKE CARE OF MYSELF!
AHA HA HA HA HA!
...

...IF ANYTHING, I'M PARTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MURDER OF YOUR PARENTS.
EVEN SO...
...I DON'T WANT MAMORU-SAN TO KILL YOU!
EVEN STILL...

PORI (SCRATCH)
ポリ
PORI
ポリ
...
WELL? HOW LONG DO I HAVE TO WAIT?
WHAT, ARE YOU SERIOUS?
ポ
PORO (FROG)
SEEYA.
YOU'RE FREE TO GO.

TSK...
TAKE CARE.
TA (TEK)
TA
TA
HUH?
BA (ZSHH)
HUH?

WAKA-GASHI-RA!?
SENJI!?
I WAITED IN PLACE LIKE A GOOD LITTLE BOY...
...AND LOOK HOW IT PAID OFF.
WHAT IS HE DOING HERE?
I CAN'T BELIEVE HE'D BE STUPID ENOUGH TO BRING WOMEN AND CHILDREN INTO A REAL YAKUZA'S BUSINESS!
SO YOU'RE TRYING TO STAND UP TO ME IN ORDER TO WIN POINTS WITH THE OLD MAN?

WELL, WHAT'S YOUR PLAN, THEN!?
ARE YOU GOING TO SWITCH SIDES AND JOIN ME? YOU'RE WELCOME TO.
AH, THE LITTLE MISS...?
I ONLY JUST REALIZED ALL OF IT NOW...THAT'S WHY I'M IN THIS POSITION.
IS THAT YOUR IDEA OF BEING CLEVER !?
NOPE...
I'VE SWORN THE RITUAL CUP OF SAKE IN MY HEART TO HER CAUSE NOW.
THEN YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO DIE...
U
...

BUT HE AIN'T GONNA LET ME PASS AS LONG AS HE'S ALIVE. IF NOTHING I DO IS GOING TO WORK HERE, THEN THE BETTER PLAY IS...
NAH, SHE WOULDN'T DO THAT. MEANING THAT EVEN IF I TRIED TO KILL HIM, IT WOULDN'T WORK?
WAIT... WOULD THAT GIRL REALLY ABANDON SENJI TO HIS DEATH, EVEN IF HE IS A YAKUZA?
ドカッ
DOKA (THWUMP)
I'VE DECIDED IT'D BE ENTERTAINING TO JUST STICK AROUND TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS.
SIDDOWN.
PA (FLIP)
I QUIT.
...
KACHA (CLICK)
WH-WHAT?

LOOKS LIKE I'VE WORKED MYSELF INTO A CORNER WITHOUT EVEN REALIZING IT.
NO USE STRUGGLING, IN THAT CASE. JUST GOTTA WAIT UNTIL I SEE A WAY OUT!
YET ANOTHER ECCENTRIC ...
SOME-THING'S GOING TO HAPPEN HERE.
THE PROBLEM IS, WHY THIS PARTICULAR SPOT?

AAAHH!
BA (LEAP)
BUON (WHOOSH)
DOKA (THWAM)

ASK BEFORE YOU SWING!
チャッ
CHA CCHIO
KOMURA !?
HUH? SHIT!
I DID ALL THAT WORK TRAINING WITH GUNS, AND NOW I'M BACK TO A DAMN SWORD!
THIS CAN'T BE THE WAY IT ENDS...

JUST MY LIFE!?
HARD FOR A GUY TO WANT TO TALK WHEN HE HEARS A THREAT LIKE THAT.
I'LL SPARE YOUR LIFE IF YOU TELL ME WHERE THE HEAD IS.
...ALL RIGHT ...
YOU SURE ABOUT THIS? HE MIGHT BE TOUGH, BUT I CAN'T IMAGINE HE'LL STAND A CHANCE AGAINST BLADE.
IT'S ALL RIGHT.

WHO'S THAT?
HE'S COMING! SOMEONE WHO CAN STOP MAMORU-SAN!
Raskal
GUOOO GRRRIN

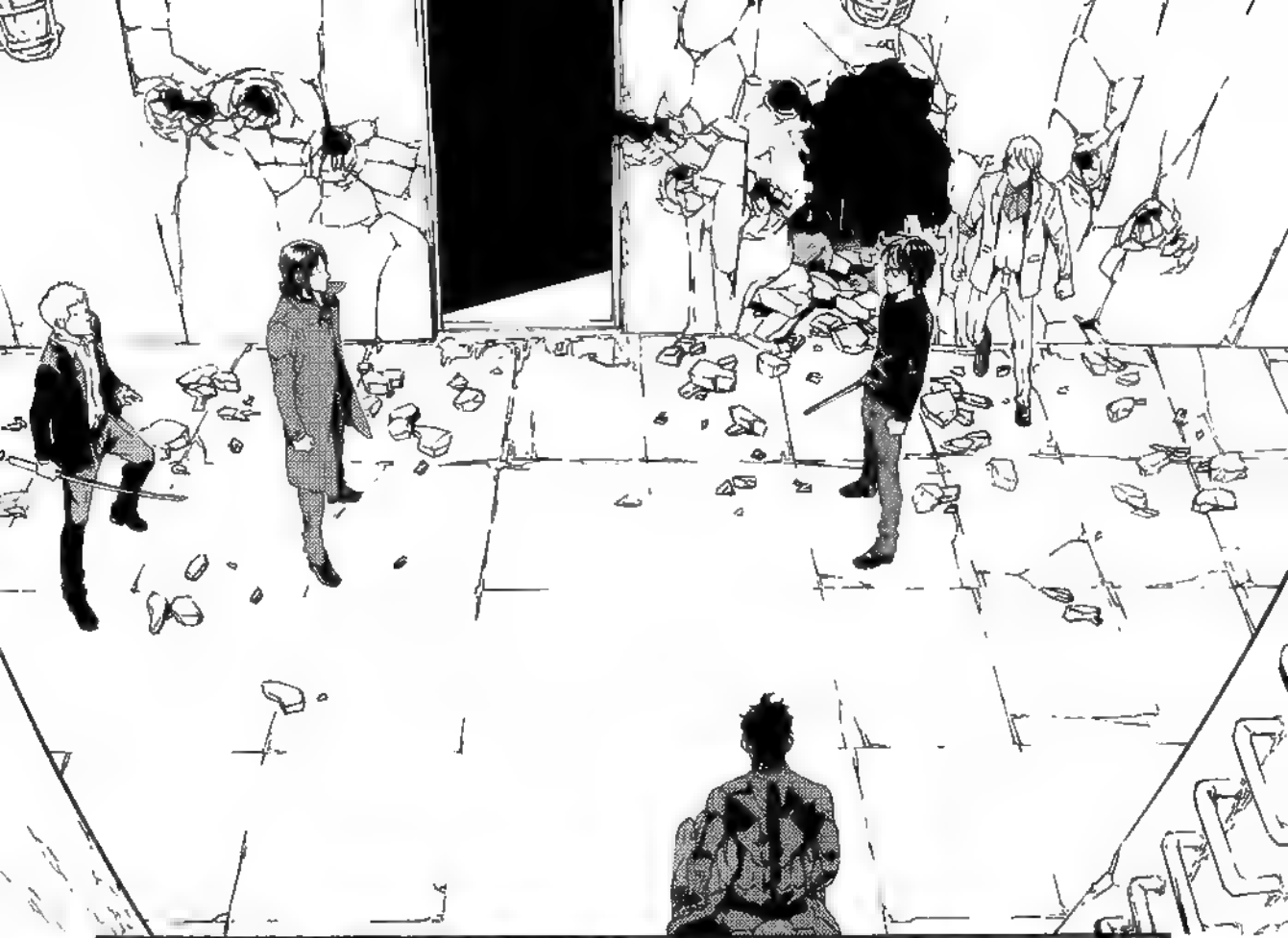
BUCE-
PHALUS
!?
BA
(LEAP)
SCREECH

ダ"
DAN (DOOM)
!?

HE'S GOOD! I DIDN'T EXPECT TO RUN INTO SOME-ONE THIS TALENTED HERE.
!?
I AM TAKING CUSTODY OF EIICHI KOMURA.
YOU WON'T HURT HIM. I WILL BE HIS SHIELD.
WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

KARITO TATE...
I'M A "PROTEC-TOR."
...
A PROTECTOR ...

Until
Death
do us
Part


UM...WHO IS THAT?
IT'S "TATE THE AEGIS"...

WAS THIS THE BOSS'S IDEA?
BUT WHAT'S HE DOING HERE?
HE'S QUITE A NAME IN THE CRIMINAL UNDERWORLD.

WELL, LET'S SEE WHAT THIS GUY CAN DO.
PERI (RIP)
WHO KNOWS WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN TO ME NOW?
WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON!? IS THIS THE REAL AEGIS!?
FIRST OFF, I NEED TO KNOW IF YOU'RE REALLY THE FAMOUS TATE THE AEGIS...
HOLD UP!

TIME FOR A TEST!
DON
DON
DON
(BLAM)

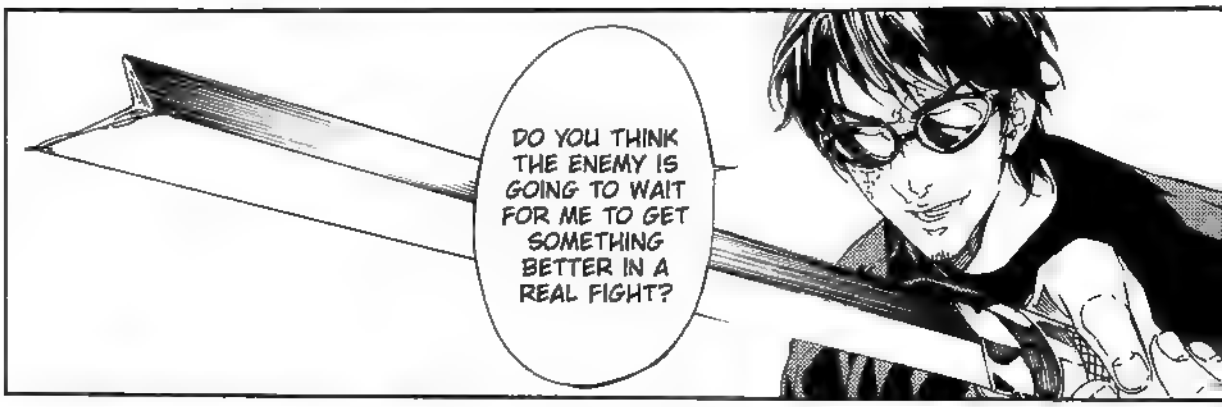
chapter 32

THAT METAL HAND, THE WAY YOU KNOCK THE BULLETS ASIDE...
YOU ARE THE REAL AEGIS!
GUI (SNAG)
NORMALLY, I'D HARDLY BOTHER TO PROTECT THE LIKES OF YOU...
...BUT THIS WAS A SPECIAL REQUEST. YOU'RE LUCKY.
AAH!

——…
——…
BUN (TOSS).
AAAH!
GUGUGU (HRRG)
HUH!?
BATA (FLOP)
BATA
?
I WAS GETTING TIRED OF THE ENEMY SKULKING AROUND AND TRYING TO CATCH ME UNAWARES.
VERY WELL...

rascal
!?
SHE WANTS ME TO RESCUE A YOUNG GIRL TRAPPED IN A SITUATION SIMILAR TO HERS.
MY AGENT PUT ME ON THIS JOB.
AS LONG AS I CAN FIGHT A MAN WORTHY OF A GOOD, FAIR DUEL, I DON'T NEED A REASON.
I DON'T CARE WHY YOU'RE HERE.
I'D HEARD THAT YOU HAD NO INTEREST IN ANYTHING BUT PERFECTING YOUR FIGHTING TECHNIQUE.
HMPH ...
THE INTEL WAS CORRECT, MAMORU HIJIKATA.

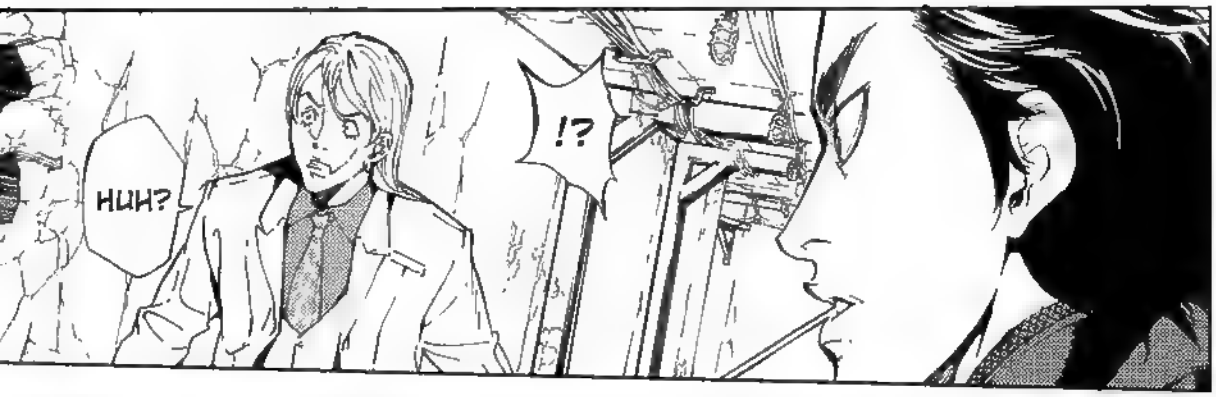
WILL YOU FIGHT ME WITH THAT BLADE?


DO YOU THINK THE ENEMY IS GOING TO WAIT FOR ME TO GET SOMETHING BETTER IN A REAL FIGHT?

...
... WOW...

...HE'S A HARDENED MAN...

I'VE NEVER SEEN MAMORU-SAN LIKE THIS...


HUH?
!?

ガガガ
ガ
ガ

GIN
GA
GIN! (TING)
IS THAT WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE WHEN HE'S GOING ALL-OUT?
...
...
PORO... (DROP)
ポロ
...HOW EASY WAS HE TAKING IT BEFORE THIS...?

HUH !?
AEGIS...
...LOST HIS FAMILY IN A TERRORIST ATTACK, ALONG WITH HIS RIGHT ARM.
BEAR: MASATO
...SOME-HOW GAINED THE ABILITY TO DEFLECT BULLETS WITH HIS BARE HANDS...
...ALONG WITH A HIGH-TECH STEEL ARM AND A NEW CALLING: HE WOULD BE A "PROTECTOR."
IN TIME, HE EARNED THE NICKNAME OF "AEGIS," AFTER THE LEGENDARY SHIELD OF THE GREEK GODDESS ATHENA.
AND THE BOY WHO FAILED TO PROTECT HIS FAMILY...

RASKAL
HE LOST HIS FAMILY...
THAT'S ALL I KNOW ABOUT HIM.
EVEN WITH THIS METAL LIMB, IT'LL BE HARD TO AVOID INJURY AGAINST HIM...
SUCH FIERCE ATTACKS ...
オ
オ
オ
オ
OOOO (OHHH)
I DIDN'T EXPECT TO FEEL THE LOSS OF MY FULL BLADE SO KEENLY.
カチャン
KACHAN (CLICK)
SU (SHH)
スッ

A DUAL-BLADE STYLE...
A CANE OF HARD RESIN IN THE HANDS OF A MASTER IS FAR MORE DANGEROUS THAN ANY FEEBLE BLADE!
!?
SU (SHH)
SASA (LEAP)
TA (TEK)

!?
TSK...
SASA (SWISH)
SO YOU WERE LEAVING ENOUGH ROOM TO ENTICE ME CLOSER.
WHY ARE YOU PULLING BACK!?
WITH YOUR SKILL, YOU SHOULD HAVE NOTICED THE SPACE I WAS GIVING YOU!!

!?
KOMURA !!
IF I WAS THE TYPE TO GLADLY ENTER A FIGHT, I WOULD HAVE TAKEN YOUR CHALLENGE.
BUT UNFORTUNATELY FOR YOU, I'M ONLY A PROTECTOR.

DA (DSHH)
TSK!
MY JOB IS TO PROTECT THE LIFE OF MY TARGET.
BA! (LEAP)
HYU (SWISH)
SORRY.
SUTA (STEK)

HE IS A DANGEROUS OPPONENT, GIFTED WITH INCREDIBLE SKILL AND NO HESITATION TO USE IT.
SEE YOU AGAIN.
IF THE TIME COMES TO FACE HIM HEAD-ON, HE COULD BE THE DEADLIEST OF FOES.
SON OF A BITCH...
...

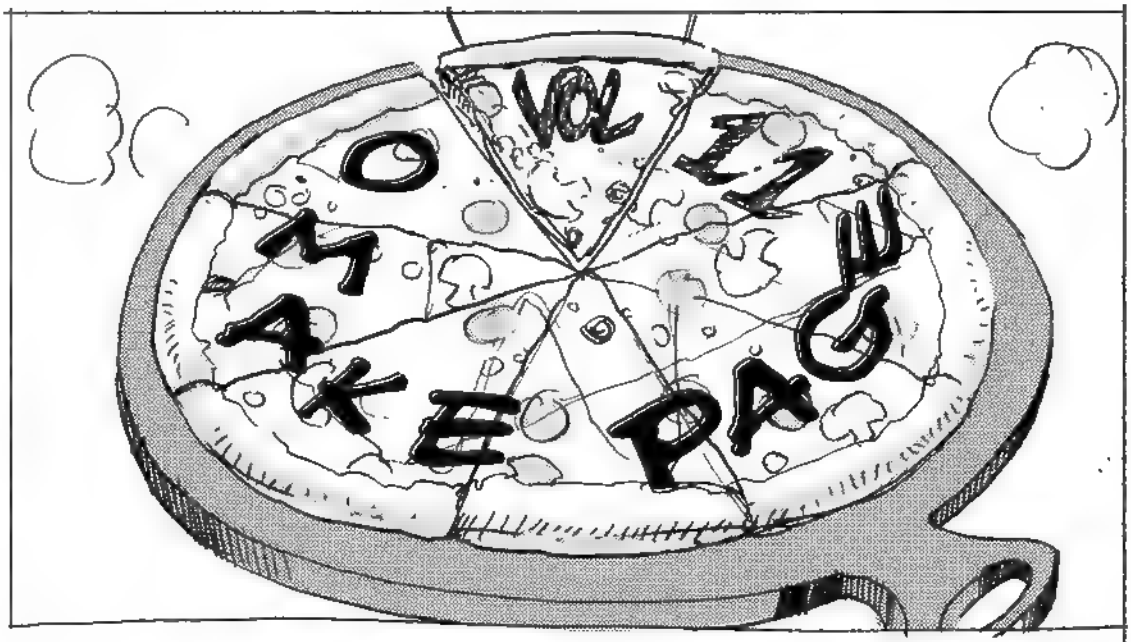
...
...
WHAT, YOU'RE JUST GONNA LET THEM LEAVE!?
I ENGAGED IN A HALF-ASSED FIGHT DUE TO MY OWN NEGLIGENCE.
IT SICKENS ME TO ADMIT THIS...BUT I LOST BECAUSE I FAILED TO MAKE HIM TAKE ME SERIOUSLY!

UH...
DA
(SLAM)
ARREST ME.
POSSES-SION OF AN ILLEGAL FIREARM.
BAN
(SLAM)
MAY I HELP YOU?
HAA
HAA
(HUFF)
WHA—!?
AAAH!!

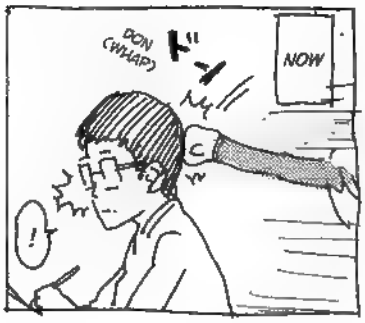
ガチャン
GACHAN
(KCHAK)
...
THERE'S A POLICE BOX RIGHT ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FOREST.
RUN OUT THERE WHILE I'M FIGHTING AND TURN YOURSELF IN.
HUH !?

I CAN'T FIGHT TWO ABSOLUTE MONSTERS LIKE THAT...
IF YOU DON'T, YOU'LL SOON FIND THAT I AM YOUR ENEMY, JUST AS HE IS.
MY GIVEN NAME IS EIICHI.
THAT'S RIGHT, KOMURA. THAT'S "OLD" AND "VILLAGE."
GOD-DAMMIT...
THAT'S NOT SHARP, YOU WROTE "DULL"!
THAT'S "SHARP" PLUS THE CHARACTER FOR "ONE."
DO YOU REALLY NEED A YAKUZA TO TEACH YOU HOW TO WRITE!?
IT'S EIICHI! DO I LOOK LIKE A DONICHI TO YOU!?

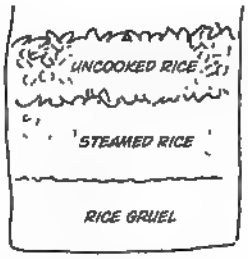
Until
Death
do us
Part



TODAY WE'RE GOING TO TALK ABOUT FOOD...

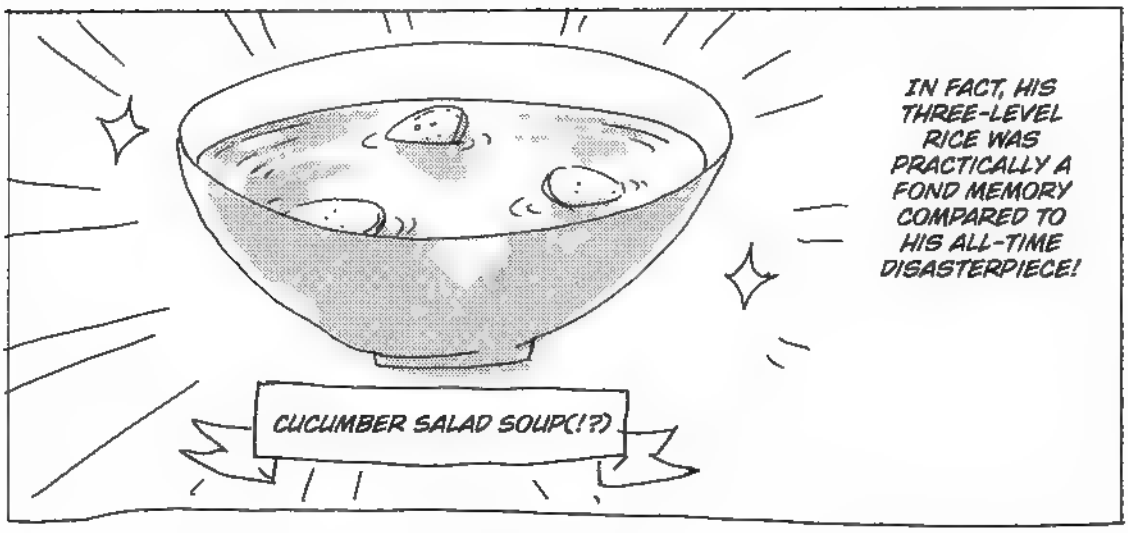


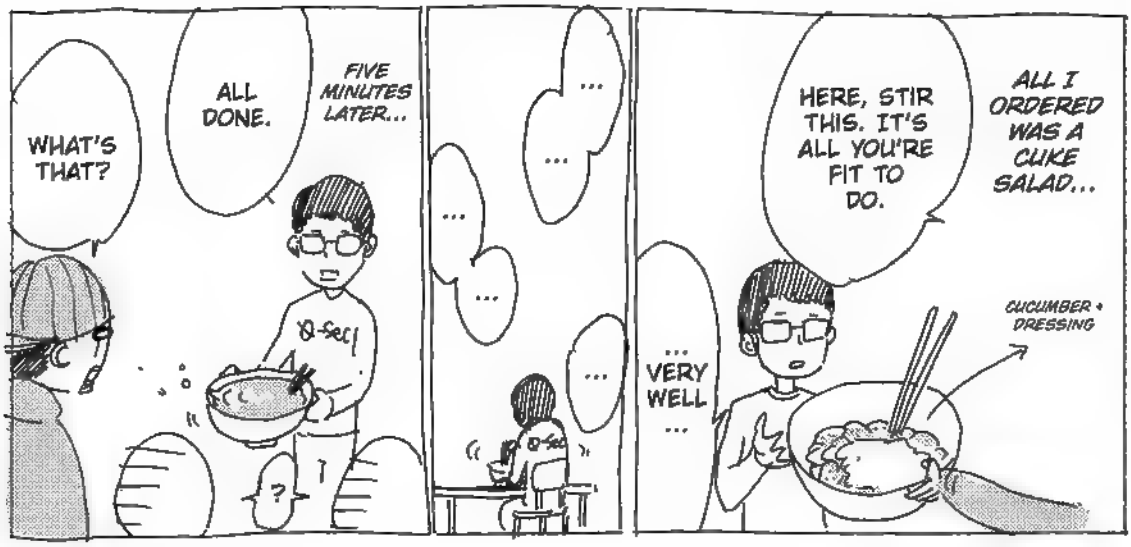
AFTER A THIRTY MINUTE BATTLE, THIS IS WHAT HE BROUGHT FORTH INTO THE WORLD!

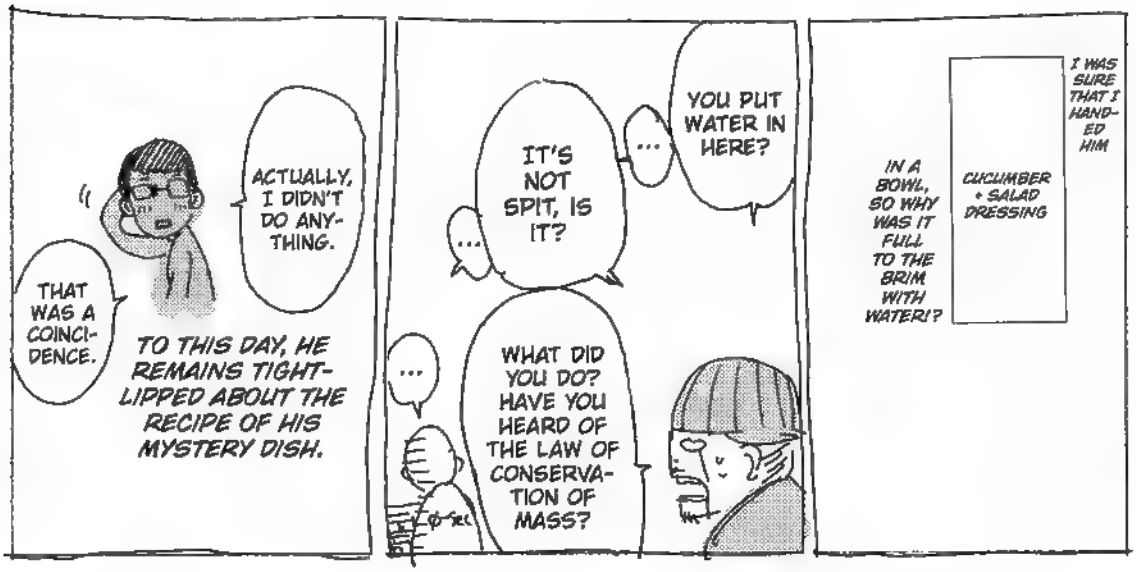


* THE ENTIRE RICE COOKER WAS FULL!

IN 2005, JUST AFTER UDDUP STARTED, I ORDERED MY FIRST ASSISTANT, O-SECOND-KUN, TO PRODUCE A MEAL.


IN FACT, HIS THREE-LEVEL RICE WAS PRACTICALLY A FOND MEMORY COMPARED TO HIS ALL-TIME DISASTERPIECE!
CUCUMBER SALAD SOUP(!?)


WHAT'S THAT?
ALL DONE.
FIVE MINUTES LATER...
...
...
...
...
...
HERE, STIR THIS. IT'S ALL YOU'RE FIT TO DO.
ALL I ORDERED WAS A CUKE SALAD...
... VERY WELL ...
CUCUMBER + DRESSING


ACTUALLY, I DIDN'T DO ANY-THING.
THAT WAS A COINCI-DENCE.
TO THIS DAY, HE REMAINS TIGHT-LIPPED ABOUT THE RECIPE OF HIS MYSTERY DISH.
YOU PUT WATER IN HERE?
...
IT'S NOT SPIT, IS IT?
...
WHAT DID YOU DO? HAVE YOU HEARD OF THE LAW OF CONSERVA-TION OF MASS?
...
IN A BOWL, SO WHY WAS IT FULL TO THE BRIM WITH WATER!?
CUCUMBER + SALAD DRESSING
I WAS SURE THAT I HAND-ED HIM

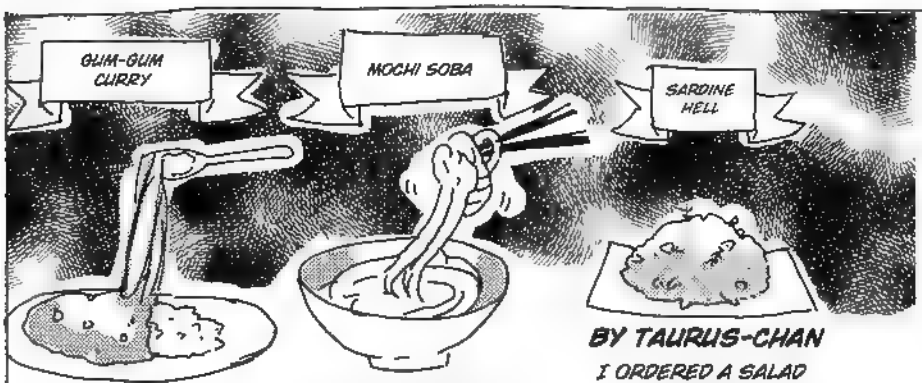
CUP RAMEN!

INSTANT CURRY!

SUNNY-SIDE UP!

WHAT'S YOUR SPECIALTY DISH?

AND NONE OF MY LATER ASSISTANTS WERE ANY GOOD AT COOKING EITHER...



LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT SOME OF THEIR ALL-TIME GREATS!

BY SURI-CHAN

A CURRY-FLAVORED SOMETHING WITH THE STRETCHINESS OF RUBBER. SHE STILL REFUSES TO RELEASE HER RECIPE.
RESULT ➡ DISCARDED

BY 0-SECOND-KUN

USING NOTHING BUT YAKISOBA INGREDIENTS, HE SOMEHOW MANAGED TO DEVELOP A NEW TYPE OF NOODLE WITH THE THICKNESS AND ELASTICITY OF A RICE CAKE!
RESULT ➡ DISCARDED

BY TAURUS-CHAN

I ORDERED A SALAD WITH CHIRIMENJAKO (TINY DRIED SARDINES), AND WHAT I GOT WAS A PILE OF MYSTERIOUS GRAY POWDER!
RESULT ➡ DISCARDED

* BGM: THEME OF THE OMEN

FRY-PAN FLIP

NO BIG ➔ DEAL

OOOH.

...

MY MANY YEARS OF EXPERTISE HAVE LEFT ME WELL-SUITED TO THE TASK.

DADADA (CHOP-CHOP)

PRO KNIFE SKILLS

OOOH.

...

THEREFORE, MOST OF THE MEALS MADE IN OUR STUDIO HAVE BEEN COOKED BY ME.

I'VE GOT A DECADE OF HOME COOKING EXPERI-ENCE!

LEAVE IT TO ME.

ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THIS?

ONCE, WHEN I BADLY BOTCHED A MEAL AND WAS TRYING OUT SOME TYPE OF FLAVORING TO COVER UP THE ROTTEN TASTE...
WHAT TO DO ...?
CHOOSE YOUR INGREDIENTS CAREFULLY...
...AND DO THE COOKING QUICKLY!
BWA-HA-HA-HA-HA!
AS FOR THE FLAVOR...LET'S JUST SAY IT WAS WELL RECEIVED.
WHAT'S YOUR SECRET?
I CALL IT THE
MIRACLE SAUCE
...I DISCOVERED A BOTTLE IN MY REFRIGERATOR FILLED WITH A MAGICAL SUBSTANCE THAT BROUGHT OUT A NEW FLAVOR IN MY COOKING!
LET US ~~EAT~~ MEET AGAIN!
THE RECIPE IS TOP SECRET.
EVER SINCE, IT'S BEEN MY GO-TO LAST SAFETY NET!
WHO ASKS A FIVE-STAR CHEF THE SECRET TO HIS FLAVOR!?
WHAT KIND OF SAUCE IS THAT?
HOW DARE YOU!!
AND SUDDENLY MY FOOD WENT FROM DISASTER TO DIVINE!
IT'S THE FLAVOR OF THE GODS!

Art Staff
Suri ♀: Chief Assistant
0-Second ♂: Background Art
Taurus ♀: Background Art

Military Advisor
Lee Hyun Seok (warmania)

SPECIAL THANKS
Shingo Takano

Crossover Planning
JESUS—Sajin Kouro, Yami no Aegis, Akatsuki no Aegis
Written by Kyouichi Nanatsuki,
Art by Yoshihide Fujiwara
(Shogakukan)

Until
Death
do us
Part

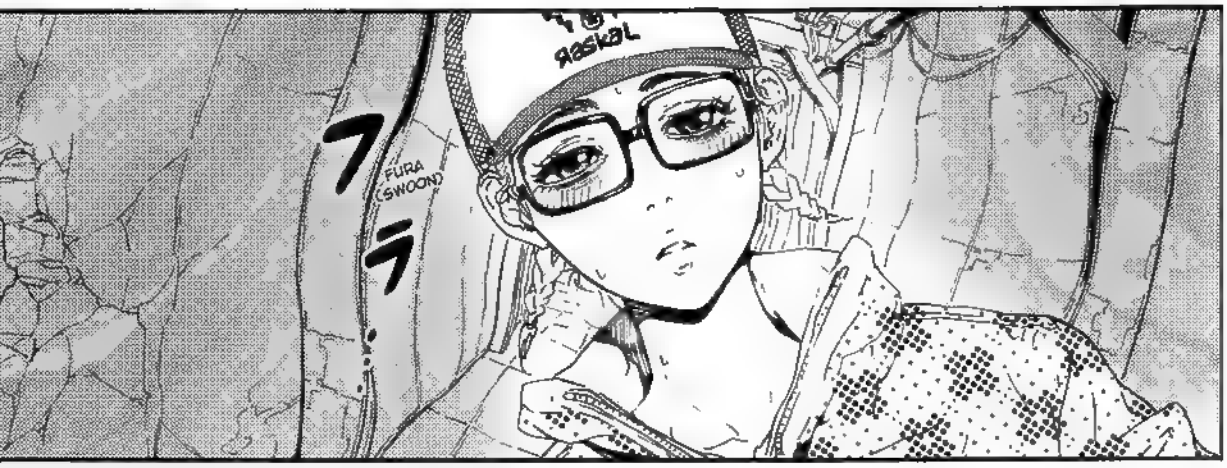
chapter 93

KACHIN (CLICK)
HO (SIGH)
I CAN SEE WHY THE BOSS WOULD HAVE PLACED HER WITH THE SAMURAI TO HOLD HIS REINS.
LOTTA STUFF TO THINK ABOUT HERE...

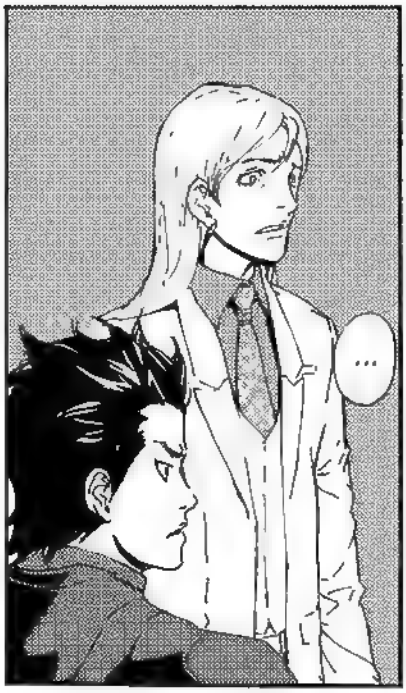
...SHE MANAGED TO CONTROL THE SITUATION AND PREVENT ANYONE FROM DYING. THAT'S IMPRESSIVE.
EVEN WITH THE ADDITION OF AEGIS TO THE FRAY ...
IF THAT PROTECTOR GUY HAD LAID HIM LOW, I WAS GONNA LAUGH AT HIS PATHETIC ASS.
BUT AFTER A BADASS FIGHT LIKE THAT, ANYTHING I SAY IS JUST SOUR GRAPES.
TSK!
DUNNO, BUT YOU ALREADY KNOW ONE OF 'EM.
HMM !?
FUCK, MAN...HOW MANY MORE OF THESE INHUMAN MONSTERS ARE OUT THERE IN THE WORLD?
CHI (TSK)

HE DOESN'T SHOW HIS TRUE NATURE, BUT I CAN TELL FROM THE WAY HE SITS, THE WAY HE WALKS. HE KNOWS WHAT HE'S DOING!
TATSUMI DAIBA.
ARE YOU SERIOUS!?
...
I GOT A LONG ROAD AHEAD OF ME...
I'VE HEARD RUMORS IN THE PAST...
...OF A MAN NAMED DAIBA WHO THREW HIMSELF INTO EVERY POSSIBLE FIGHTING STYLE AS A MEANS TO DEAL WITH HIS EXTREME INSOMNIA.
DON'T GET DOWN ON YOURSELF.
YOU WOULD HAVE HELD YOUR OWN IF IT WASN'T HIM YOU WERE FACING.
!?

KEH!
IT'S JUST THAT CROSSING THAT THRESHOLD WILL BE A HERCULEAN TASK.


フラ
FURA (SWOON)

!?
ガバ
GABA (SNAG)


...

SHE PUSHED HERSELF TOO FAR...
IT WAS TIRING ENOUGH FOR ME JUST RUNNING AROUND TRYING TO KEEP HER SAFE.

LET'S GO, SENJI.

SHE DIDN'T EVEN KNOW HOW EXHAUSTED SHE IS.

HUH !?
Y- YEAH!

WHAT KIND OF MONSTER IS THIS GUY?
DOESN'T HE CARE ABOUT HER?
UH, HEY!

!?
YOU'VE SET QUITE A DIFFICULT TASK FOR ME.
BUT I MUST RISK MY LIFE TO ACCOMPLISH IT AT THE SAME TIME.
YOUR EXPECTATIONS ARE CORRECT.
IT'S QUITE A LIKELY OUT-COME.
IF YOU'RE GIVING UP...
...THEN THIS REPRESENTS YOUR END.

IF YOU WANT IT DONE PERFECTLY, I'M TALKING ABOUT A FULL YEAR.
...
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEAN. I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS.
BUT TIME AND SOME PREPARATIONS ARE NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT.
BUT AT THE VERY LEAST, YOU'LL NEED TO WAIT SIX MONTHS.
AS FOR A MEANS OF CONTACT ...
...HOW ABOUT THIS OLD CLASSIC?

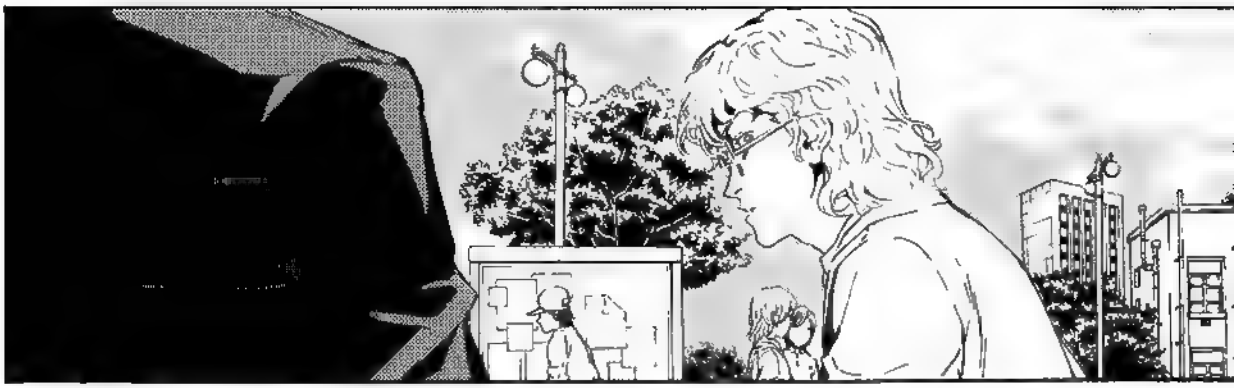
HOWEVER...
?
LET'S GET STARTED ON IT.
THIS CONVERSATION IS OVER.
YOU'RE ON. SUCCESS... OR DEATH. THAT'S ALL.
THIS PLAN IS FOR THE GIRL'S SAKE, YES?
I FIND IT DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND WHY YOU GO TO THESE LENGTHS FOR HER.

...
I ONLY CAME WITH YOU BECAUSE YOU SAID YOU'D TELL ME WHERE YOUR BOSS IS.
YOU SURE IT'S SAFE NOT BEIN' WITH THE GIRL?
BUT...
BUOOO (VRRRM)
ブオオオ

ALL RIGHT.
JUST HURRY UP.
I WANT TO FINISH THIS BEFORE THE NIGHT IS OVER.
BATAN (CHUNK)
THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS LIES IN YOUR BOSS'S DECISION...
NO ONE'S GOT HIS BACK ANYMORE. HE'S NAKED TO THE ELEMENTS.
...TO TAKE OUT HARUKA'S PARENTS AND PUT HER IN THIS PREDICAMENT.
AND NOW HE'S GOING TO KNOW HELL.

AAHHH!!
AH!

藍空医科大学
AISORA MEDICAL UNIVERSITY
ザワ
ZAWA
ザワ
ZAWA (MURMUR)
警視庁 POLICE 警視
TAPE: POLICE LINE - DO NOT CROSS



IT'S A SHAME ABOUT THE SECURITY GUARD WHO WAS IN THE WRONG PLACE AT THE WRONG TIME, BUT AT LEAST YOU ESCAPED HARM.

YEAH, I WAS LUCKY. I WAS OUT LATE AT THE TECH-EXCHANGE MEETING WITH MS. KAMIOKA'S TEAM FROM TEI U.'S ROBOTICS LAB.
BUT, TATE—!

TATE !?

THEY STOLE MY ARM, DIDN'T THEY?
I KNOW, SAWATARI, I KNOW.

BRAND NEW SOFT-WARE TOO. IT WAS DESIGNED FOR USERS TO MASTER IT WITHIN A MONTH OF REGULAR OPERATION.
control
equipmen
automati
checkup
systems
checkup
...
IT WAS A DEVELOPMENT MODEL PACKING SMALLER, MORE LIGHT-WEIGHT MACHINERY.
DIDN'T EVEN HAVE AN OFFICIAL NAME FOR IT YET. IT'S CALLED "NOBODY."
A NEW MODEL, HUH...?
BUT I'M HERE TODAY FOR A DIFFERENT REASON.
LOOK AT THIS.
ALL RIGHT. I'LL GET IT BACK.

IT WAS A STEEL-SLICING SWORD IN THE HANDS OF A BLADE DEMON.
HOLY... LOOK AT THAT DAMAGE!
BLADE DEMON?
THAT'S COMPOSITE TITANIUM ALLOY AND CERAMICS. IT CAN DEFLECT A MAGNUM BULLET! HOW'D IT GET SO HORRENDOUSLY SCRATCHED!?
I REALIZE YOU'RE PREOCCUPIED, BUT CAN YOU FIX THIS NOW?
ALL RIGHT. I'LL COME BACK TOMORROW.
...BUT UNTIL FORENSICS FINISHES, I CAN'T TAKE ANYTHING OUT OF THERE.
IF IT'S JUST EXTERNAL DAMAGE, I CAN SWITCH IT OUT FOR A SPARE...

GOT ANY IDEAS WHO MIGHT HAVE DONE THIS?
HEY!

SEEMS LIKELY TO BE RELATED TO THE JOB I TOOK ON LAST NIGHT.
SOME-ONE WHO WANTS A PROSTHETIC ENOUGH TO COMMIT A CRIME.

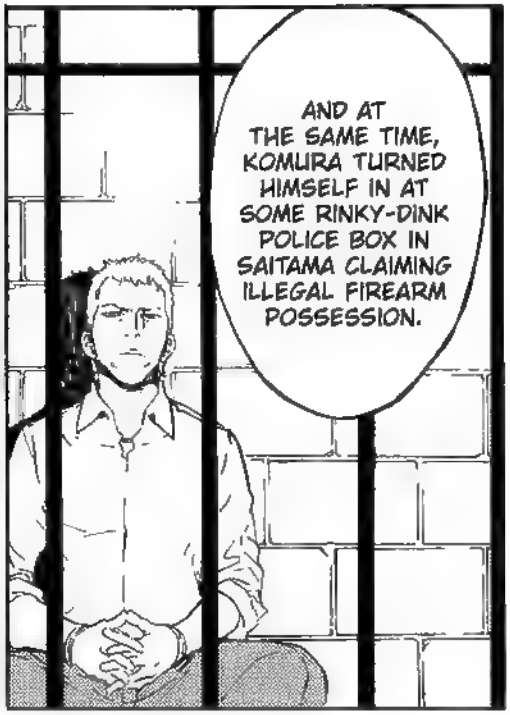
ブオオオ
警視庁
警視庁

YOU HEAR THE BIG NEWS, MASUDA?
THIS MORNING, HIRAIZUMI, THE KUMI-CHO OF THE KAKUHOU-KAI, SENT WORD AROUND THAT HE'S FOLDING THE ORGANIZATION.

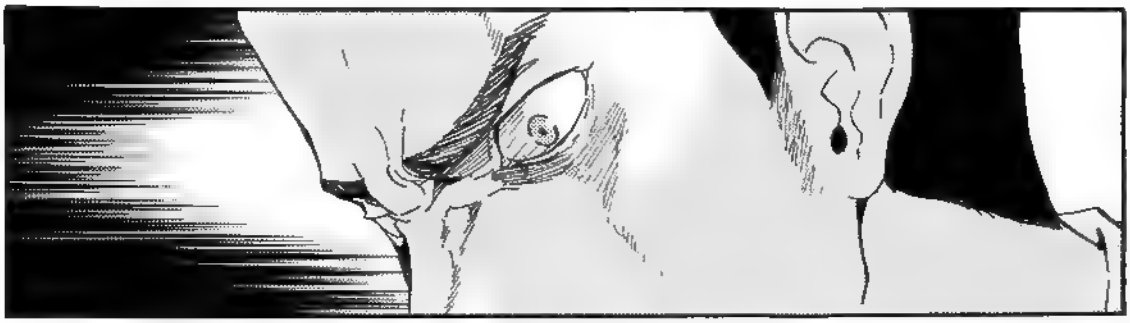
THE INSTANT I GET BACK TO TOKYO, THEY SHIP ME OFF TO THE SCENE. BORDERLINE ABUSE, I SAY.
OH, DON'T COMPLAIN.

THE KAKU-HOUKAI !?

HUH !?
YOU THINK HIJIKATA HAS SOME-THING TO DO WITH THIS?
SEEMS PRETTY DAMN LIKELY.


AND AT THE SAME TIME, KOMURA TURNED HIMSELF IN AT SOME RINKY-DINK POLICE BOX IN SAITAMA CLAIMING ILLEGAL FIREARM POSSESSION.

ガチャ
GACHA
CLICK



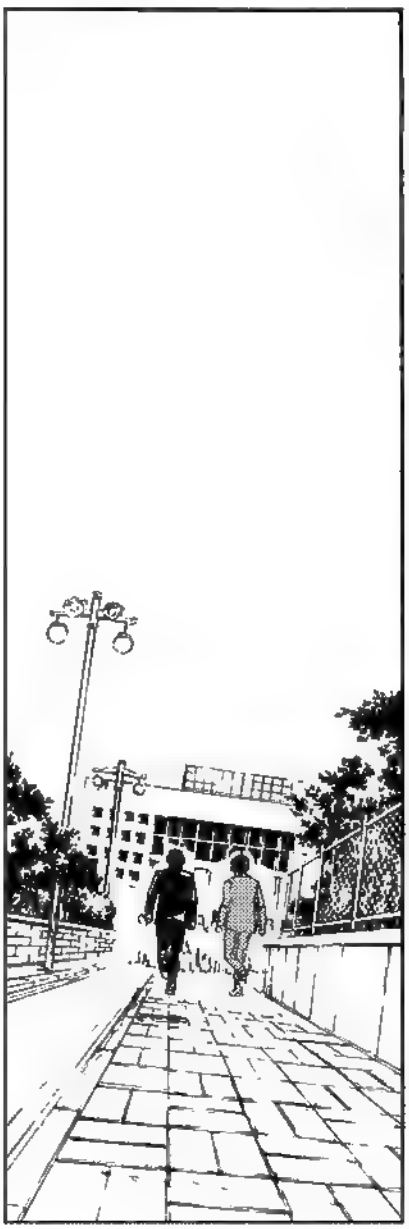
WHO IS HE? AN OLD FRIEND?
WAS THAT WHO I—?

!?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, GENDA-SAN?

...
?

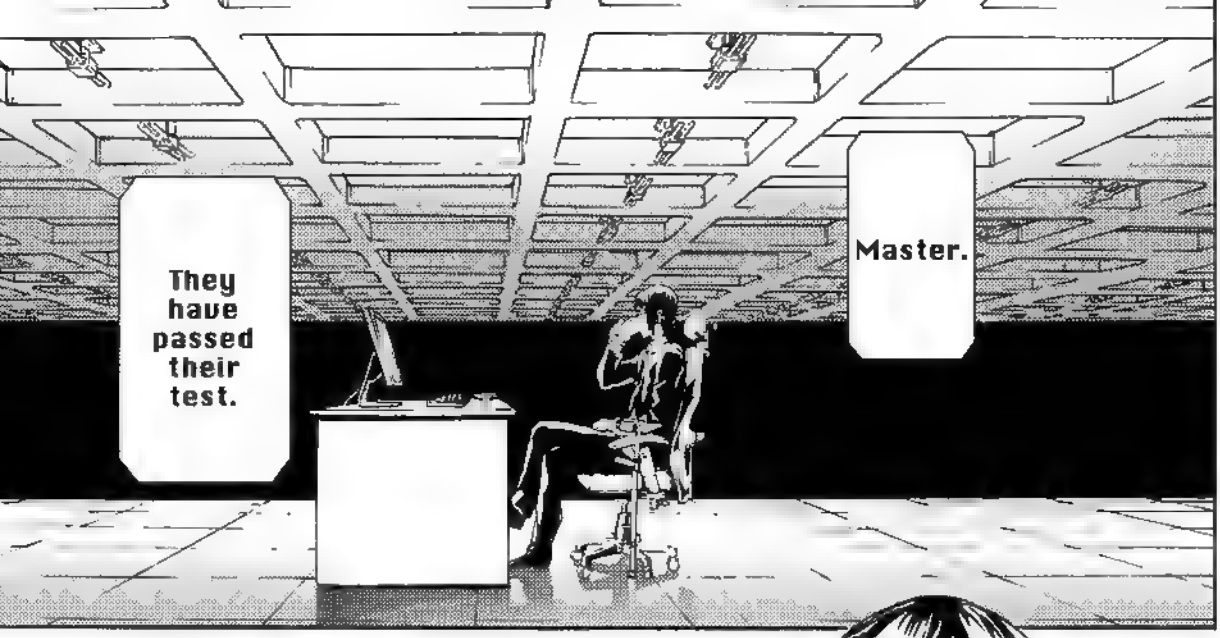
I WASN'T CLOSE TO HIM. THAT'S KARITO TATE—HE'S A FORMER S.A.T. AGENT.
TATE ...?
OF COURSE... YOU'RE RECENT ENOUGH TO THE FORCE THAT YOU WOULDN'T EVEN KNOW HIM.
HUH? WAIT...
...ARE YOU SAYING THAT GUY JUST NOW IS "TATE THE AEGIS," THE PROTECTOR WITH TACIT APPROVAL FROM HQ?
HE WAS OFFICIALLY LABELED DECEASED A FEW YEARS BACK, AND NOW HE MAKES A LIVING AS A BODYGUARD.
REMEMBER THE GUY WHO LOST HIS FAMILY AND RIGHT ARM TO A TERRORIST ATTACK?

...
THAT'S HIM.
WHAT'S HE DOING HERE?



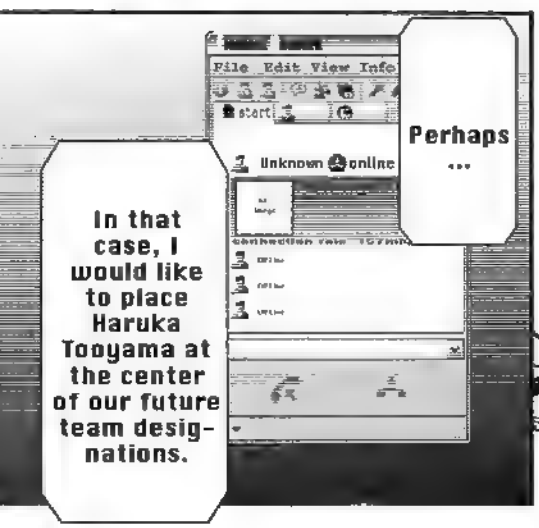
THAT'S EASY ENOUGH TO FIND OUT.

Until
Death
do us
Part


They have passed their test.
Master.

KOTO (TNK)
WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF TATE THE AEGIS, THE SITUATION WAS SETTLED WITHOUT ANY FATALITIES. THIS DESERVES SOME RECOGNITION, I THINK.

INDEED.
MAMORU HIJIKATA'S ACTIONS WERE APPROACHING DANGEROUS THRESHOLDS, BUT HARUKA TOOYAMA PULLED HIM BACK USING HER PRECOGNITIVE ABILITIES.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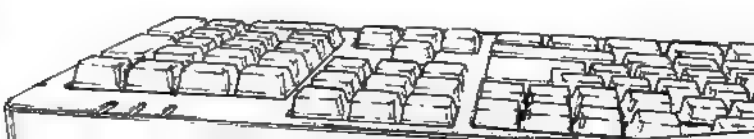
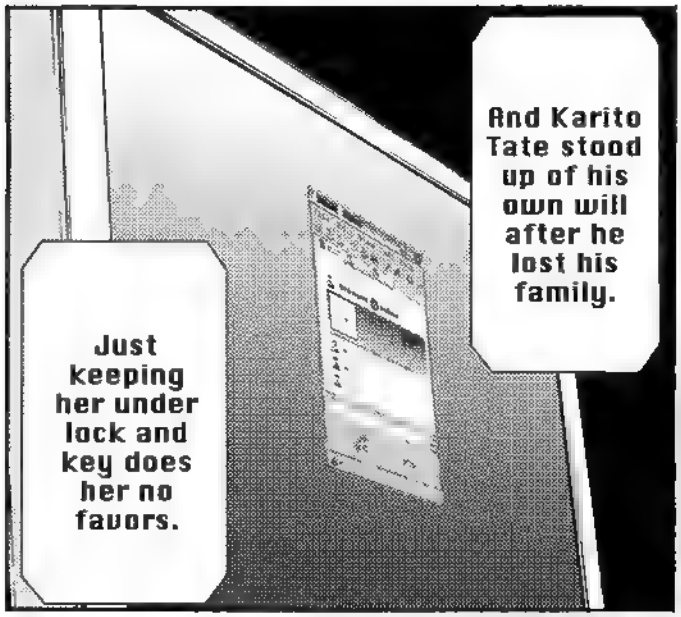
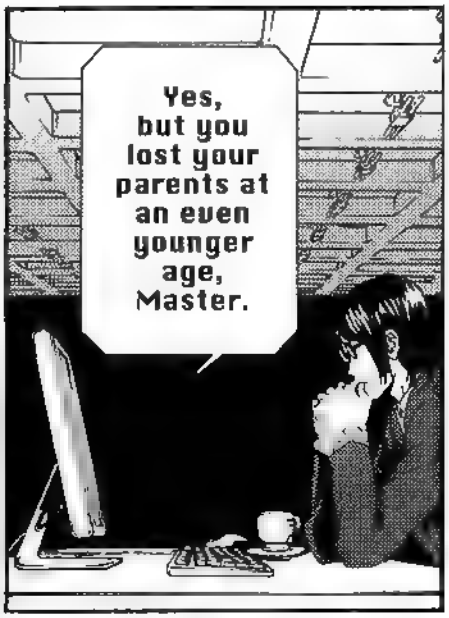
Perhaps ...
In that case, I would like to place Haruka Tooyama at the center of our future team designations.



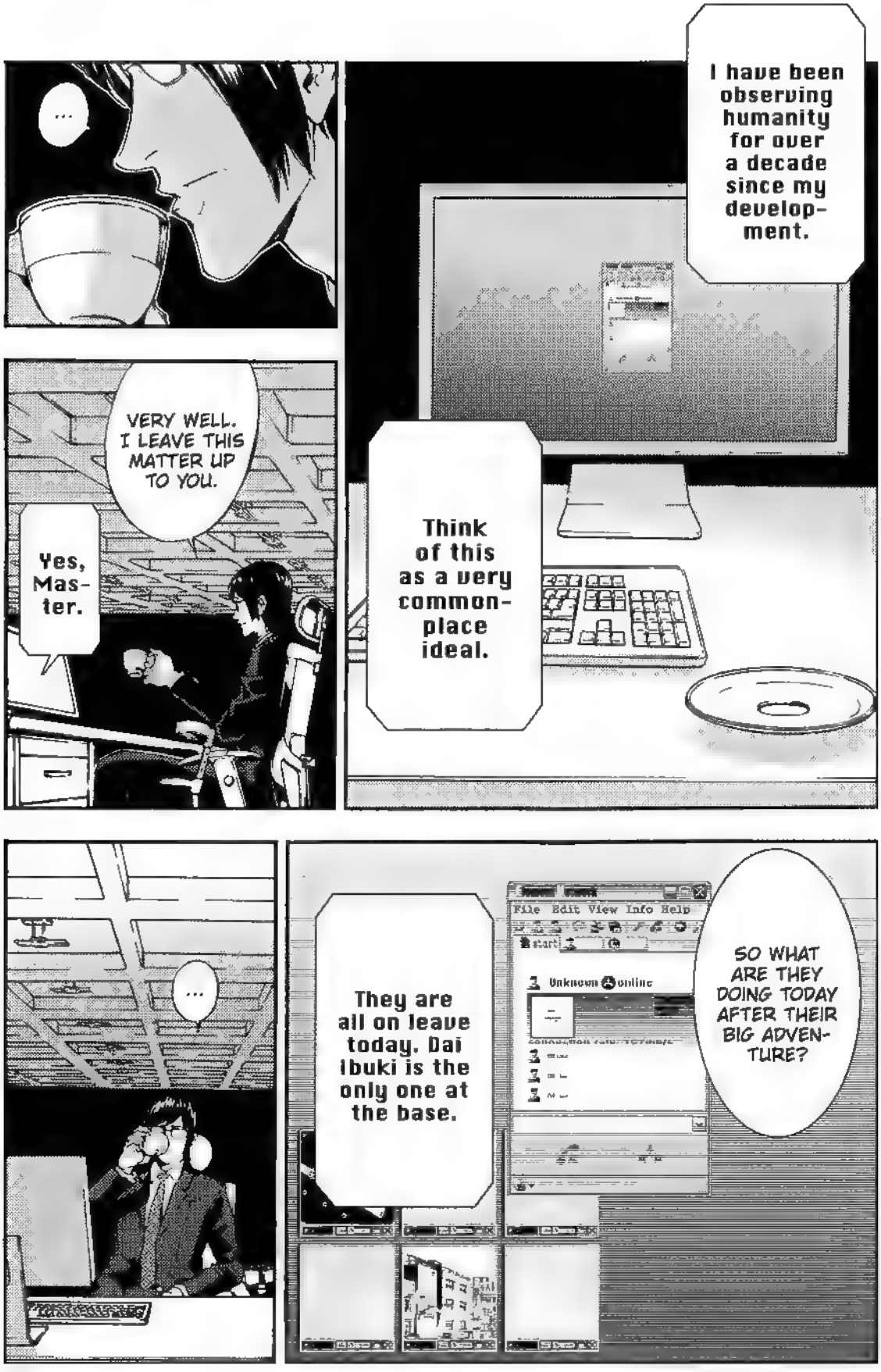
BUT IT WOULD BE CRUEL TO PLACE EVEN FURTHER STRESS ON A THIRTEEN-YEAR-OLD GIRL.
ARE YOU KEEPING THAT IN MIND?


And Karito Tate stood up of his own will after he lost his family.
Just keeping her under lock and key does her no favors.


Yes, but you lost your parents at an even younger age, Master.

EVEN A MACHINE CAN BE A POET...

...
...then she will have no future at all.
If you do not allow her to seize her own future in the same way that you did...


...
I have been observing humanity for over a decade since my development.
Think of this as a very commonplace ideal.
VERY WELL. I LEAVE THIS MATTER UP TO YOU.
Yes, Master.
...
They are all on leave today. Dai Ibuki is the only one at the base.
SO WHAT ARE THEY DOING TODAY AFTER THEIR BIG ADVENTURE?
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chapter 94

?
...
WHO ARE YOU WAITING FOR?
SENJI-SAN!?
GACHA (CLICK)
ガチャ

COME, GET IN.
NOW, NOW! LET'S NOT SWEAT THE SMALL DETAILS.
I CHECKED IN WITH HIM, THOUGH I DIDN'T EXPECT HIM TO MEET UP RIGHT AWAY LIKE THIS.
HE SAID HE WANTED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT SOMETHING.
HEY!
SIT IN THE BACK, MAN.
ガチャ
GACHA (CLICK)
THANK YOU.
バタン
BATAN (SLAM)
I'M NOT PLACING MY FULL FAITH IN YOU YET.
...

ブオオオオ
BLOOD (VRRM)

WELL, HOW ABOUT WE START WITH ME TAKING YOU TO THIS KILLER RAMEN PLACE I FREQUENT? IT'S A BIG HIT.
WHAT DO YOU SAY?

WHAT'S THE PLAN?

UH... OKAY...
H-HOW ABOUT SOME HIGH-CLASS GOURMET FOOD IN GINZA?

I'M NOT DESPERATE ENOUGH FOR RAMEN TO *WAIT IN LINE* FOR IT!
A REAL MAN DOESN'T WAIT AROUND FOR FOOD!

AREN'T THOSE CHAIN RESTAU-RANTS !?
WE'RE GOING TO KOKOICHI OR TENICHI.
LOOK, I'M PAYING FOR THE MEAL. LET ME TREAT YOU TO SOME-THING NICE!
...
THIS IS NOT GOING WELL...
BESIDES, I'D RATHER CUT OPEN AN ATM FOR MONEY OR KILL MYSELF THAN HAVE A YAKUZA BUYING ME LAVISH GIFTS.
DON'T LOOK DOWN ON CHAINS.

ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT. YOUR MEAL, YOUR CALL.
THIS GUY'S PICKIER THAN ANY YAKUZA I'VE MET.
I TOLD YOU, IGAWA-SAN GETS PLENTY OF MONEY FROM THE NETWORK.
WHAT WERE WE GOING TO DISCUSS?
SO...
BUOOO (VRMM)
ブオオオ
WELL, IT MIGHT BE PRESUMPTUOUS FOR ME OF ALL PEOPLE TO BRING THIS UP, BUT...

I KNOW THAT THE ACTIONS OF THE KAKUHOUKAI HAVE CAUSED SOME REAL PROBLEMS FOR YOU, AND HAVING BEEN A PART OF THAT, WELL...
...YOU HAVE MY SYMPATHIES.
I KNOW THAT YOU AND THAT KOMURA MAN DIDN'T HAVE ANY DIRECT CONNECTION TO WHAT HAPPENED TO MY PARENTS.
SO YOU CAN LET IT GO ALREADY...
IT'S ALL RIGHT.
EH !?

NO! THAT WON'T CUT IT!!
YOUR WORD ISN'T THE ONLY FACTOR HERE!

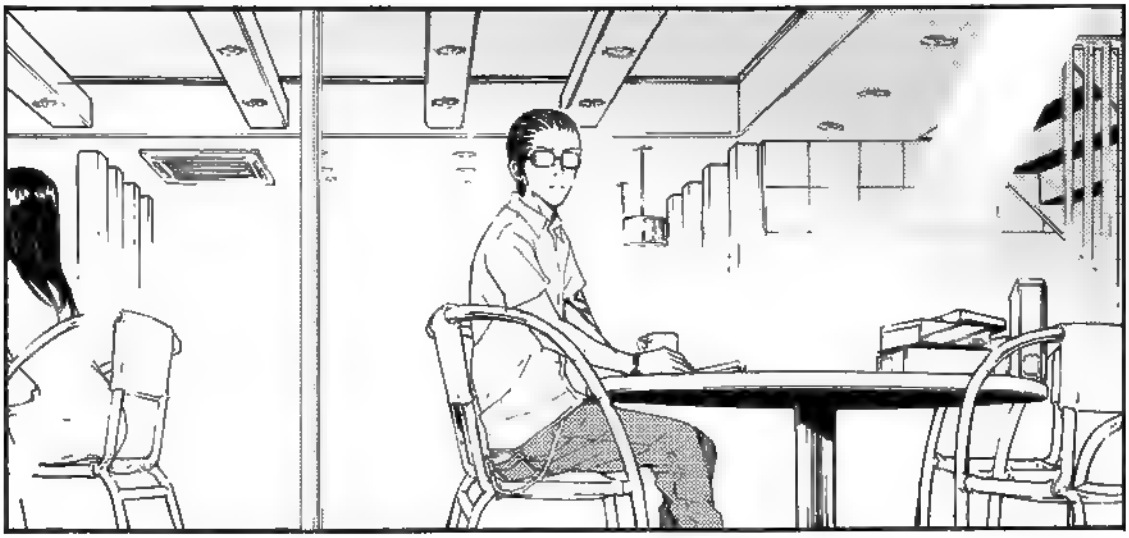
BUT...

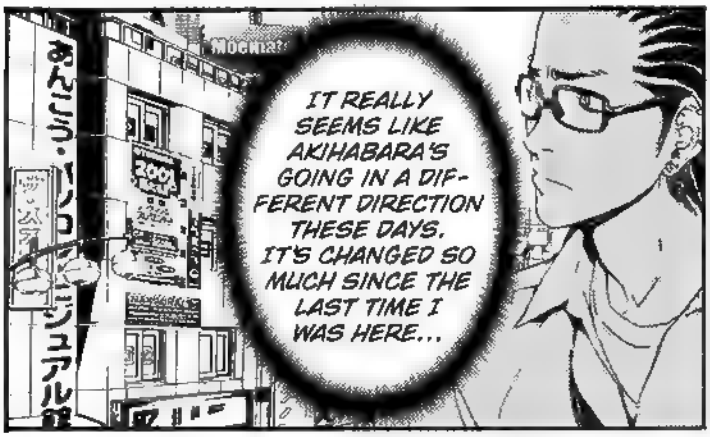
I NEED TO WORK THROUGH THIS UNTIL I CAN FORGIVE MYSELF AGAIN!
KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE GODDAMN ROAD.

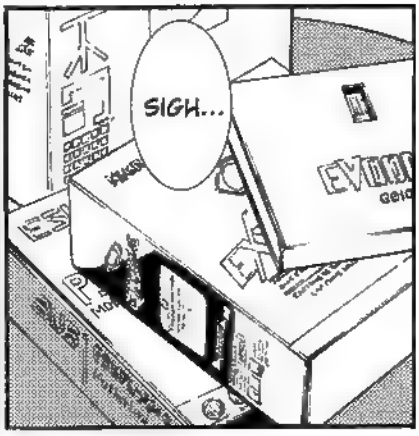
HE MIGHT LOOK LIKE A CHUMP ...
...BUT HE'S PRETTY OLD-SCHOOL INSIDE.

NO!
I'M SORRY IF IT'S A BOTHER TO YOU, BUT I'M NOT BACKING DOWN FROM THIS!!

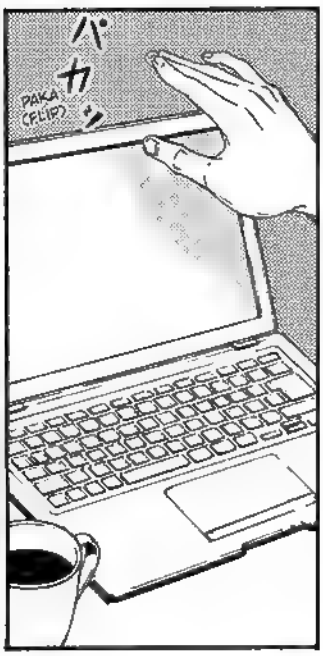
GOOD GRIEF...
I, SENJI TAMAGAWA, PLEDGE YOU MY LIFE UNTIL THIS DEBT IS REPAID.
...
ブオオオ
BUOO (VRMM)
IT
TOI GAME
DVD




IT REALLY SEEMS LIKE AKIHABARA'S GOING IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION THESE DAYS. IT'S CHANGED SO MUCH SINCE THE LAST TIME I WAS HERE...


SIGH...

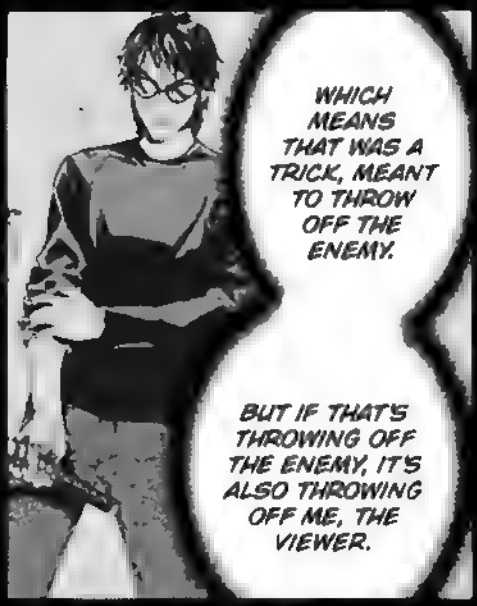
KATA (TAP)
KATA
KATA
EVERYWHERE I GO, I DO THE SAME DAMN THINGS.


PAKA (FLIP)

...

THEY CAN'T MOVE FAST ENOUGH TO MAKE YOU DOUBT YOUR EYES TELLING YOU THAT THEY JUST UP AND VANISHED...

AND YET AEGIS WAS ON EXACTLY THE SAME PAGE.


WHICH MEANS THAT WAS A TRICK, MEANT TO THROW OFF THE ENEMY.
BUT IF THAT'S THROWING OFF THE ENEMY, IT'S ALSO THROWING OFF ME, THE VIEWER.

I DON'T KNOW WHOSE TRICK IT WAS...
...BUT I CAN TELL THEY'RE BOTH FORMIDABLE.
JUST KEEP TRAINING YOURSELF UNTIL YOU CAN REACT WITHOUT THINKING.
SHIT... FINE, MAN! I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT...
THAT'S IT!
I CAN THROW OFF THE ENEMY WITH MOVEMENT, SO IF I CAN MASTER THE OTHER STUFF, THAT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE.
THE "TRICK" TO "THROW OFF"...
WHO'S THERE!?

THERE SHOULDN'T BE ANY-ONE ELSE HERE...
SU (SHH)
BA (SPIN)
スゥ...
SUU

I DON'T KNOW WHO THE HELL YOU ARE, BUT SNEAKING INTO THIS PLACE WAS THE LAST MISTAKE YOU'LL EVER MAKE.
HUH? ???
DROP YOUR WEAPON.
I'M NOT GOING TO GIVE YOU ANOTHER WARNING.
CHAKI (CH-CHK)
チャキッ

GOOD BOY. I MIGHT EVEN BUY YOU SOME CANDY AFTER THIS.
KARAN (CLANK)
カラン
THIS IS ALSO A BASE OF OPERATIONS FOR TEAM BUCEPHALUS !!
NEVER HEARD OF IT. I HAVE BUSINESS WITH BLADE.
YOU DON'T SEEM LIKE YOU BELONG HERE TO ME.
YES, I DO!
FIRST YOU STICK A GUN IN MY FACE, THEN YOU TREAT ME LIKE A LITTLE BOY!?
WHO ARE YOU? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE !?

WHAT ABOUT IGAWA?
TOO BAD. I WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING HIM.
HMM ...
THE COMPUTER NERD'S IN AKIHABARA.
WELL, HE'S OUT WITH THE LITTLE LADY! THEY WON'T BE BACK UNTIL TONIGHT.
I SEE.
YOU'RE LIKE MAMORU, BUT CLEARLY A RUNG LOWER— NO, TWO.
WHAT ?
...
?
チャ
CHA (CHK)

WELL, THAT'S REALLY RUDE!
I'LL GIVE YOU PROPS FOR AT LEAST NOTICING THAT I BROKE IN...
...BUT YOUR REACTION WAS TOO SLOW.

FUCK OFF!
I REGRETFULLY DECLINE YOUR GENEROUS OFFER... BITCH!

IF YOU DON'T TRAIN YOURSELF UP, I'M NOT GOING TO WASTE MY TIME ON YOU.

I'VE FOUND MYSELF A NEW TOY. ♡

...
SUTA
SUTA (TEK)

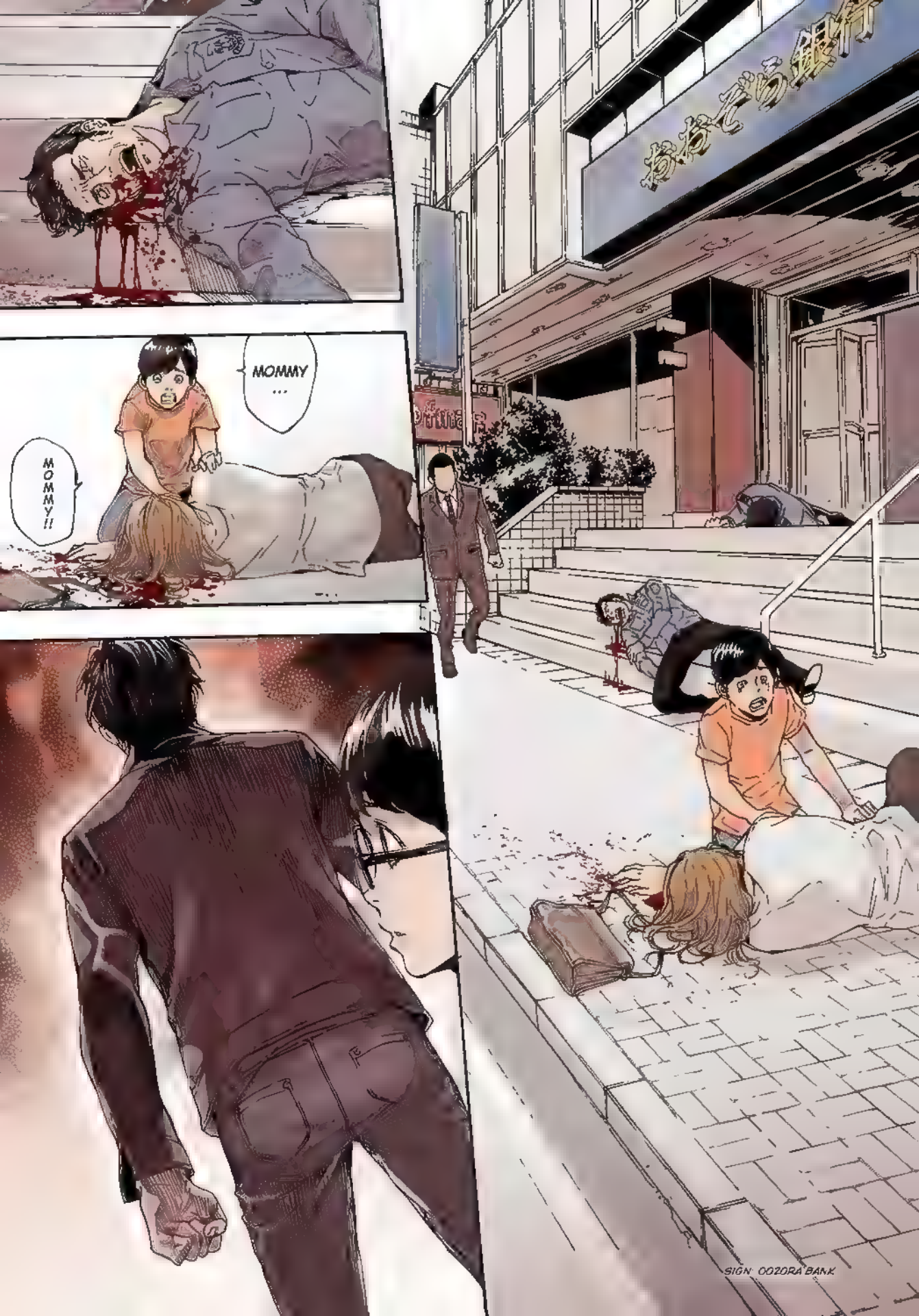
ブオオオオ
!?
STOP THE CAR!
STOP!
HUH?
Y-YOU GOT IT!

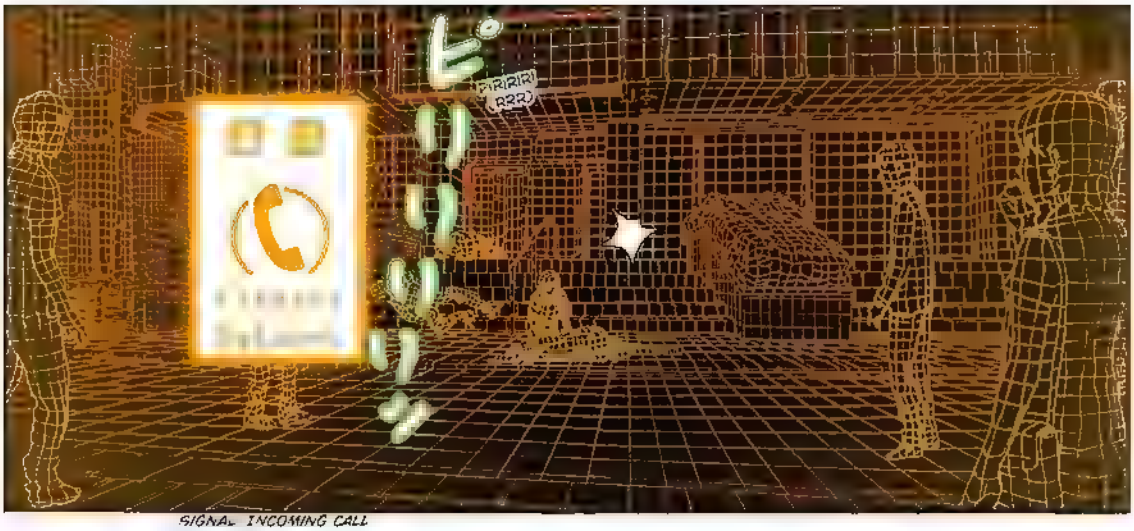
!?
GACHA (CLICK)
ガチャッ
MAMORU-SAN!
...
DADA (DASH)
ダダダッ
ドンッ
DON (BLAM)
ドンッ
DON
!?
UM, HELLO?

ドン
ドン
BIGM OOZORA BANK

MOMMY!
MOMMY!
STAY BACK !!
...
THIS WAS A BANK ROBBERY.
YOU SHOULDN'T SEE WHAT HAPPENED HERE.

Until
Death
do us
Part

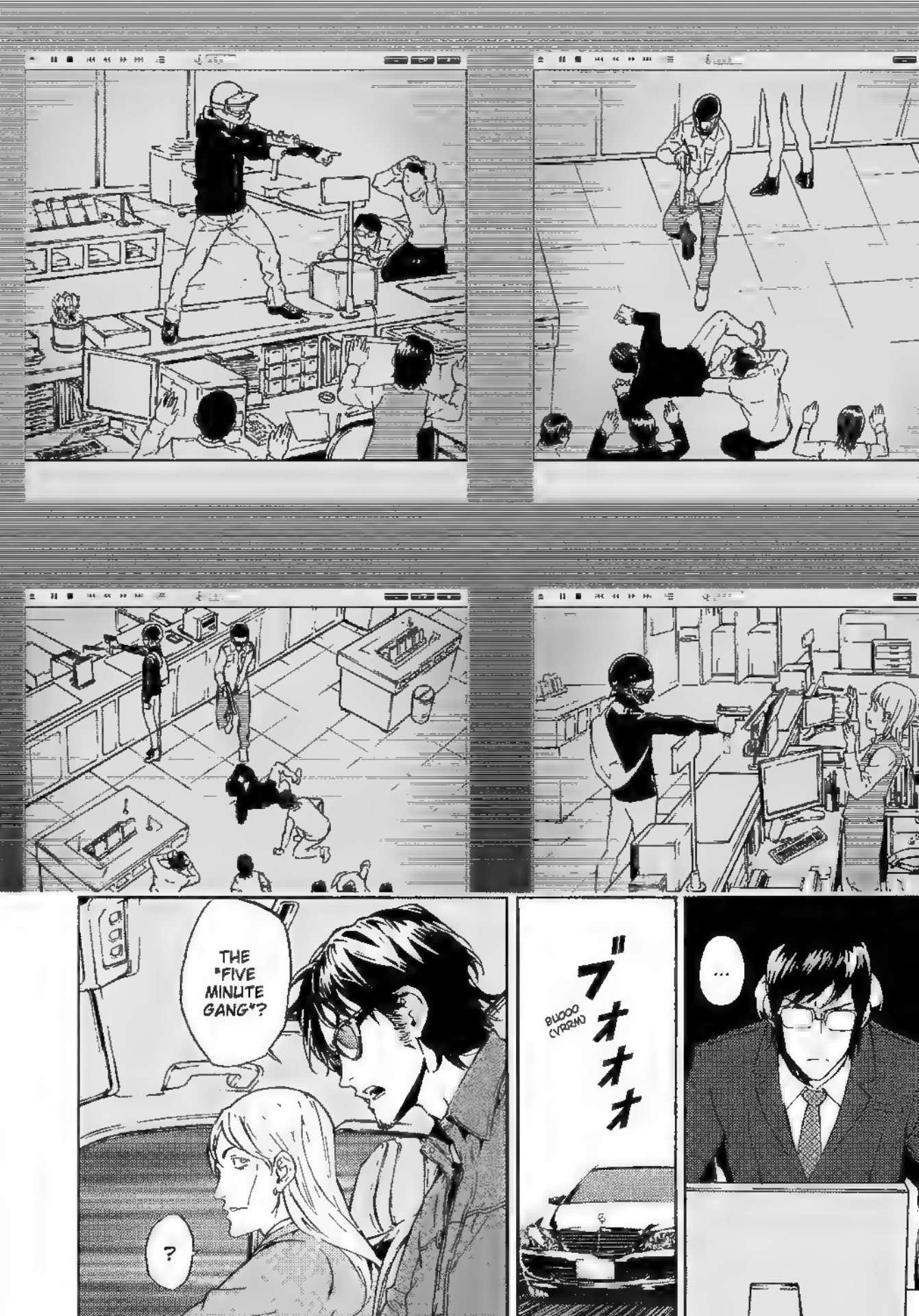

MOMMY
...
MOMMY!!
SIGN: OOZORA BANK



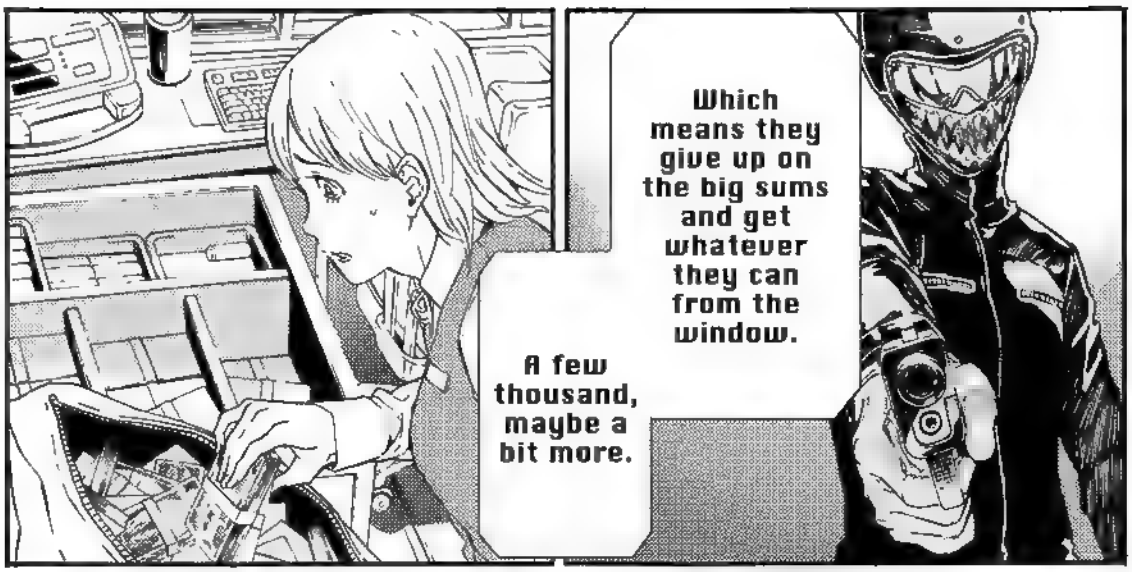
SIGNAL INCOMING CALL

chapter 95

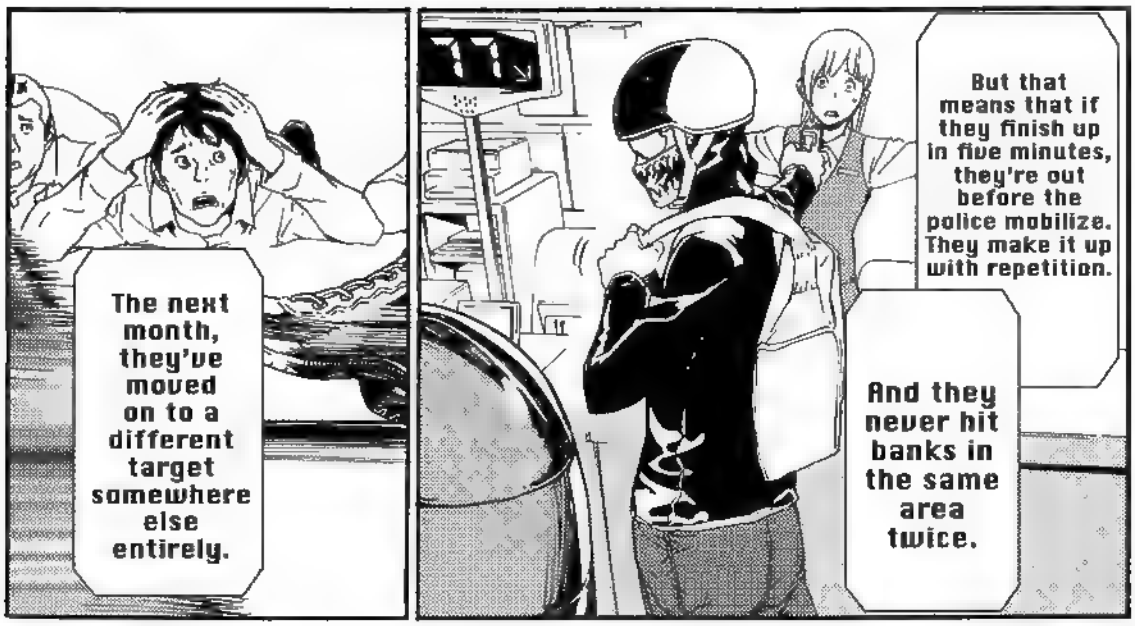
PULL THE CAR AROUND!!
HUH?
SENJI!
TA (TEK)
TA
...
KURU (SPIN)
UH, SURE THING!


THE "FIVE MINUTE GANG"?
?
ブオオオ
BLOOO (VRRM)
...

It's a trio of unidentified international thieves.
THAT'S RIGHT. THEY EARNED THAT NICK-NAME DUE TO THEIR ABILITY TO PULL OFF A HEIST FROM ANY FINANCIAL INSTITUTION WITHIN FIVE MINUTES.
IS THAT REALLY POSSIBLE?
IT SHOULDN'T BE POSSIBLE TO PRODUCE THAT MUCH MONEY WITH CURRENT ACCOUNT SYSTEMS IN ONLY FIVE MINUTES.
All we know at present is that, based on their skin tone, they're believed to be Asian.


Which means they give up on the big sums and get whatever they can from the window.
A few thousand, maybe a bit more.

UM...
WHO ARE YOU TALKING TO...?
THAT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE. THE RISK DOESN'T MATCH THE REWARD.


The next month, they've moved on to a different target somewhere else entirely.
But that means that if they finish up in five minutes, they're out before the police mobilize. They make it up with repetition.
And they never hit banks in the same area twice.

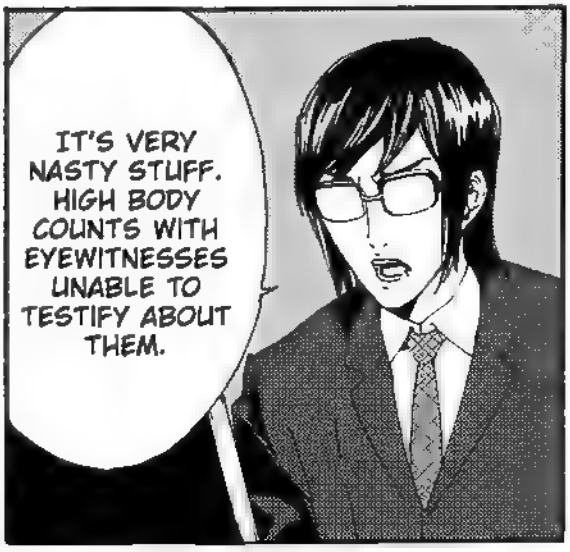
In some cases, they even resurface in a different country.
For some reason, they leave a bank teller alive, but every other employee and any customers present...

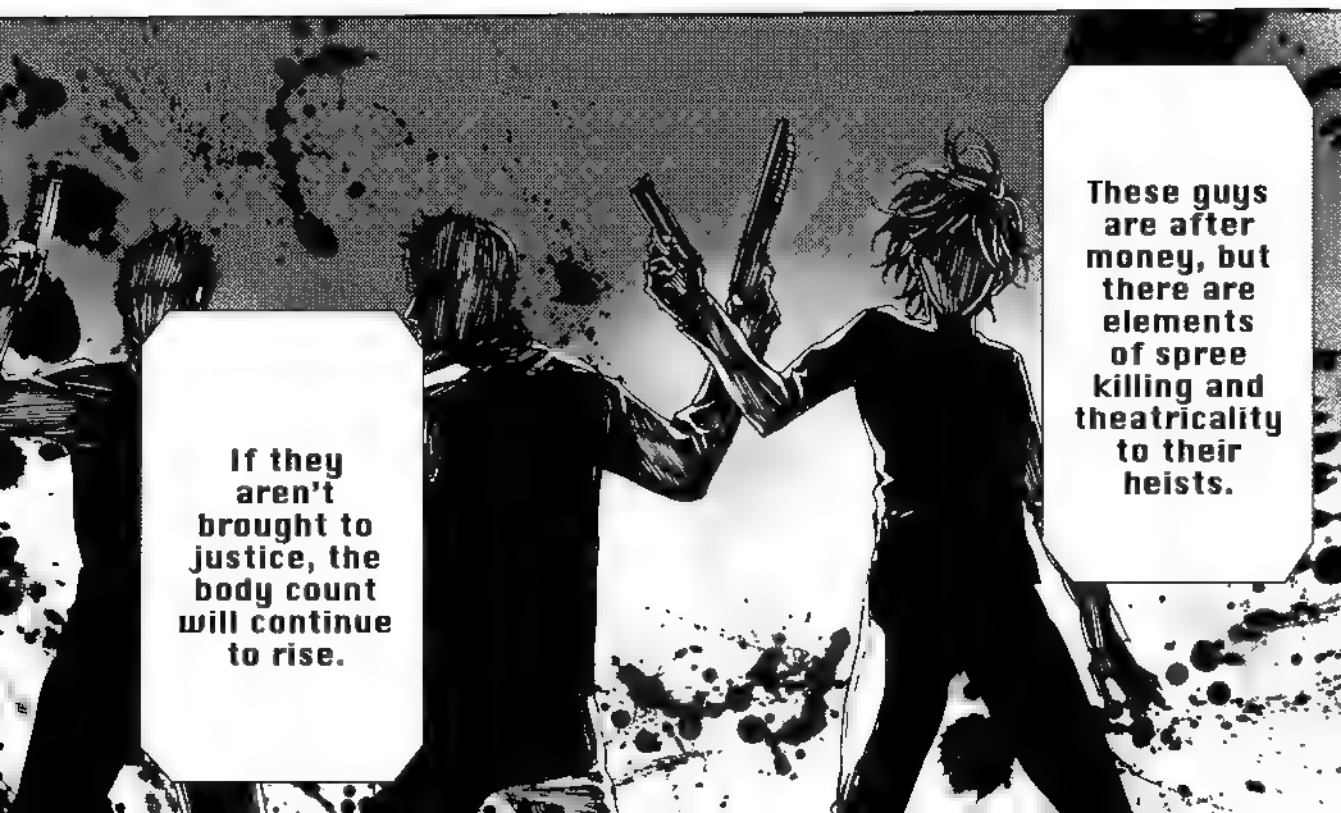
...are gunned down in cold blood.
They're trigger-happy.
So much so, in fact, that they've been tagged with that moniker: "The Trigger-Happies."

...and she cannot put her experience into words.
The sole survivor is left in a state of shock, her memory uncertain...

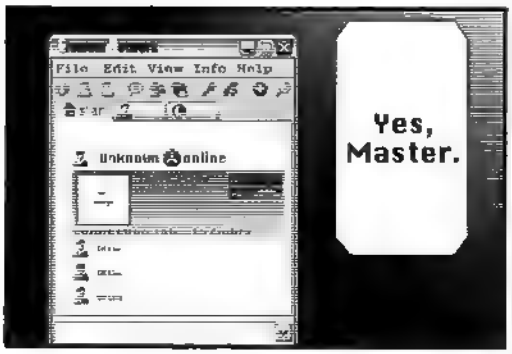
The more the rumors of their cruelty spread, the less likely their future victims are to resist.
OH NO...

REAL SCUM OF THE EARTH...


IT'S VERY NASTY STUFF. HIGH BODY COUNTS WITH EYEWITNESSES UNABLE TO TESTIFY ABOUT THEM.


If they aren't brought to justice, the body count will continue to rise.
These guys are after money, but there are elements of spree killing and theatricality to their heists.

NO PROBLEM ...
GIVEN THIS STATE OF EMERGENCY, I WILL BE GIVING DIRECT ORDERS.
IS THAT UNDERSTOOD?
I DON'T KNOW EVEN KNOW WHO WE'RE AFTER ...
WELL, I GOT PLENTY OF PROBLEMS ...
ガ
GAKON (THUNNK)
ン
ピー
PII (BEEP)
uiii (VVHEE)
ウイイイ


File Edit View Info Help
Yes, Master.

MAMORU HIJIKATA IS WORKING WITH AN OUTSIDER...
...BUT I DON'T WANT THE GANG GETTING AWAY. THEY WILL CONTINUE TO ACT TOGETHER FOR NOW.

WE HAVE TO BE CAUTIOUS, SPARKY.
HAVE DAI IBUKI PUT ON STANDBY JUST IN CASE.

TARGET
HACK INTO THE TRAFFIC NETWORK'S STREET SIGNALS AND ENSURE LOCALIZED FLOW IS AS SMOOTH AS POSSIBLE.
MAKE IT EASIER FOR THE POLICE TO PURSUE.
PATROL
PATROL
PATROL

I'LL ORDER HIM TO BACK THEM UP IF NECESSARY.
Yes, Master.

TARGET
PATROL
PATROL
PATROL
PATROL
Yes, Master.

IF MY LEG WAS FULLY HEALED...
...I'D BE HEADING OUT MY-SELF.

FUAN
FUAN (WEE-OOO)
FUAN

TSK!
FUAN (WEE-OOO)
FUAN
FUAN
FUAN
FORGET IT.
LEAVE THAT TO HIM!
KIKIIKI (SCREECH)
FUAN
FUAN
FUAN

AFTER THEM! INTO THE ALLEY!
BUOOO (VRMM)
GYURURU (VRRRM)
!?

DAN CTHWAN
BIBIII CCRAKK
GAGAGA CSCRUNNH

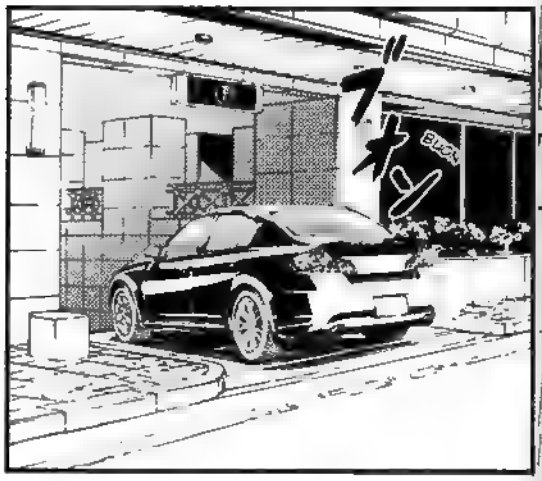
GA
GA
GA
GA
GLION (VROOOM)
DOGAA (KABOOM)
SHIT!

ドゴッ
DOGA (BWAMM)
ボン
BUON (VWOOM)

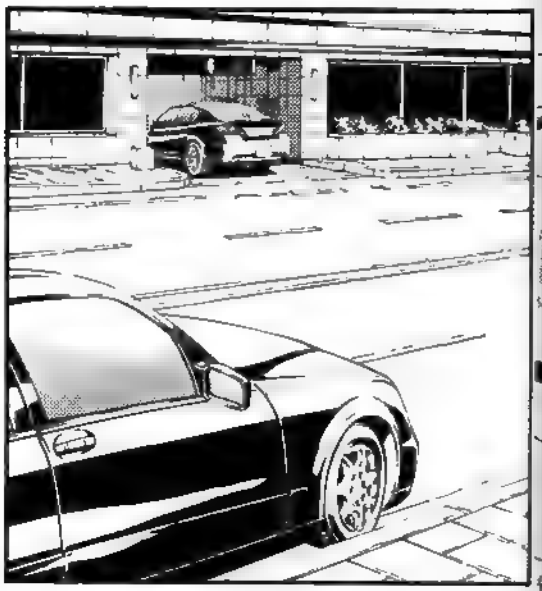
ブオオオ
BUOOO
FUAN (WEE-OOO)
FUAN
FUAN
FUAN

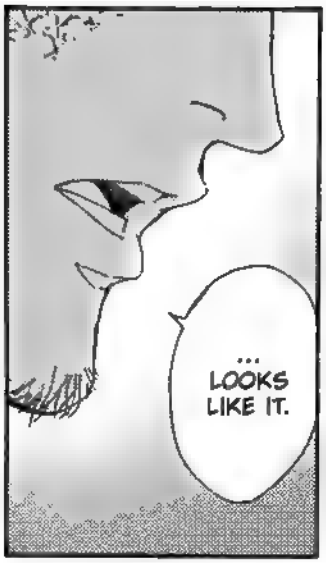
SO IT WASN'T JUST CLEVERNESS AND SIMPLE FLUKES THAT KEPT THEM FROM BEING CAUGHT BEFORE THIS.
I SEE ...
THIS WILL HARDLY BE A WALK IN THE PARK.
NOT ONLY ARE THEY RUTHLESS, THEY'RE CAUTIOUS AND VERY GOOD AT WHAT THEY DO.

ブオオオ
BUOOO (VRMM)
バタン
BATAN (SLAM)


ブオン

CITY HOTEL

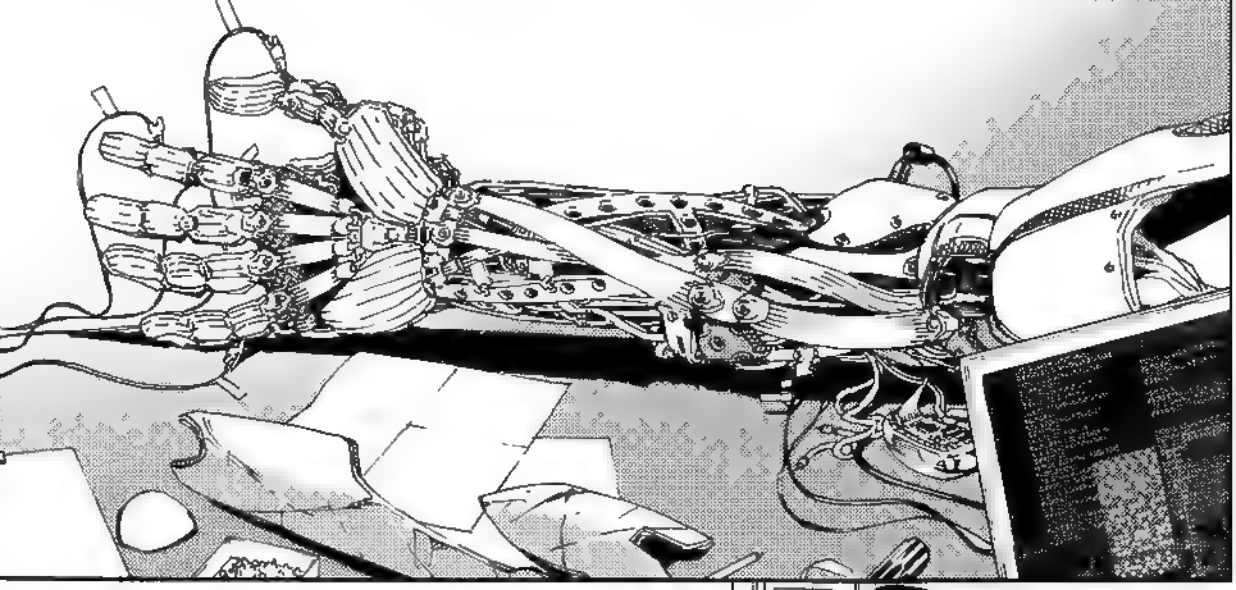



... LOOKS LIKE IT.

IS THAT THEM?

ザッ
GACHA (CLICK)
ガチャ
IT'S TIME TO SEND THESE GUYS UP SHIT CREEK.

Until
Death
do us
Part



PARDON ME.

...

WH-WHO ARE YOU!?
IT'S ALL RIGHT, SAWA-TARI.
HE'S HERE FOR ME.

IT'S BEEN A WHILE, TATE. NOT SINCE WE SPARRED AT THE PRECINCT'S DOJO.
YOU SEEM WELL, GENDA-SAN.

chapter 96

I SEE...
YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH EVEN MORE HELL THAN THE RUMORS SAY. I CAN SEE IT IN YOUR FACE.
...
...
LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE ALREADY HAD A RUN-IN...

...
...WITH MAMORU HIJIKATA.

WHAT... DO YOU WANT?
A PROTECTOR AND A CRIME-HUNTER...
...ARE BOUND TO MEET AT SOME POINT.

WE LOOKED INTO A NUMBER OF THINGS YESTER-DAY.

...

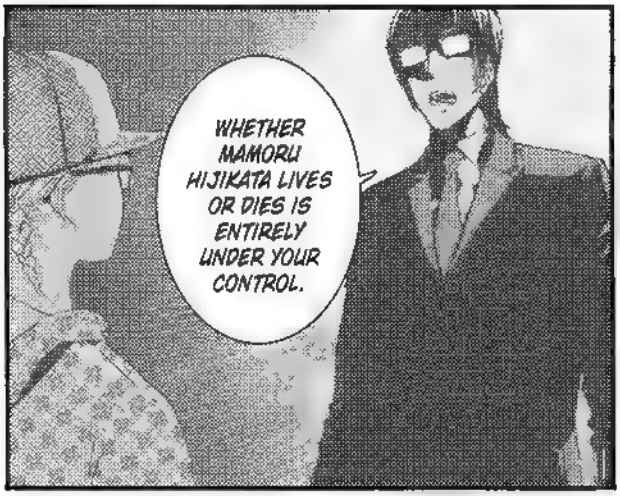
...

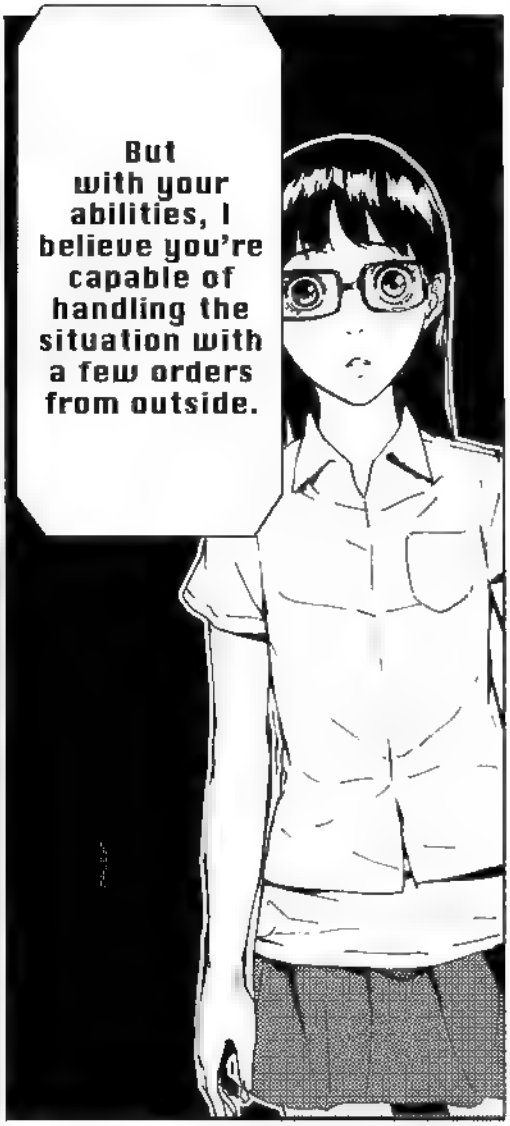
IS THIS YOUR HIGH-TECH, BULLET-REFLECTING PROSTHETIC LIMB?

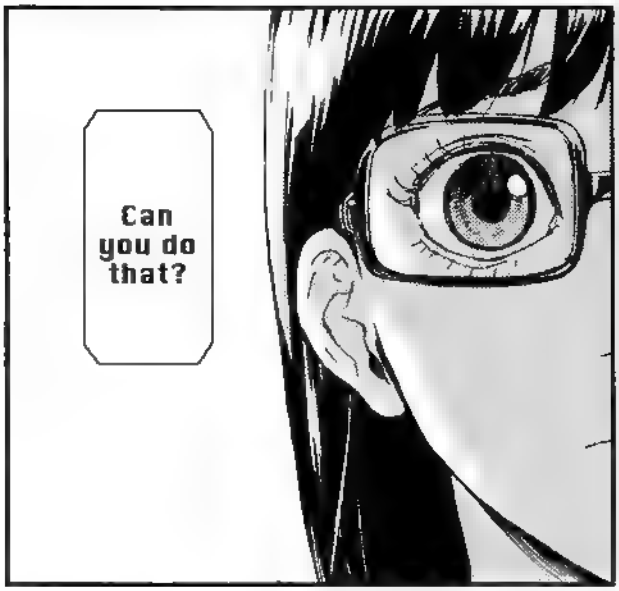
I'M GOING IN!
YOU WATCH HARUKA.
CITY HOTEL
Wait, please.
カツ カツ (KA TOKO KA)
HUH? HUH!? WHOA, HANG ON...

I want to put command of this situation on the ground into the hands of Haruka Tooyama-san.
WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
?
WHAT !?
HUH !?

I WANT TO PLACE CONTROL IN HER HANDS.
IT'S DIFFICULT FOR ME TO MAKE INSTANT DECISIONS REMOTELY.


WHETHER MAMORU HIJIKATA LIVES OR DIES IS ENTIRELY UNDER YOUR CONTROL.


But with your abilities, I believe you're capable of handling the situation with a few orders from outside.


Can you do that?

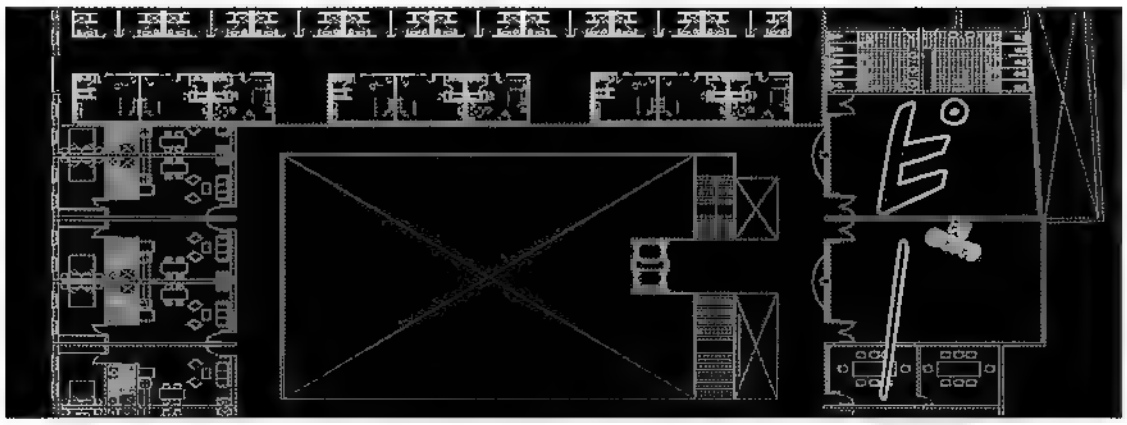
...VERY WELL.
GO AHEAD AND DO IT.
...
UM...
I UNDER-STAND ...
BUT YOU HAVE TO ENSURE THERE ARE NO CASUAL-TIES.
MINIMIZE DAMAGE AND EYEWIT-NESSES.
THEY WON'T HESITATE TO INVOLVE OTHERS AND ESCALATE CHAOS.
THEN HOW WILL WE ATTACK THEM?

HOTEL
WELL, THE IMAGE HASN'T CLEARED UP IN MY HEAD YET ...

BUN
BUN (SHAKE)
ブン
ブン
...
PUT US IN THAT GARAGE.
SENJI! DRIVE.
RIGHT AWAY!
WHAT !?

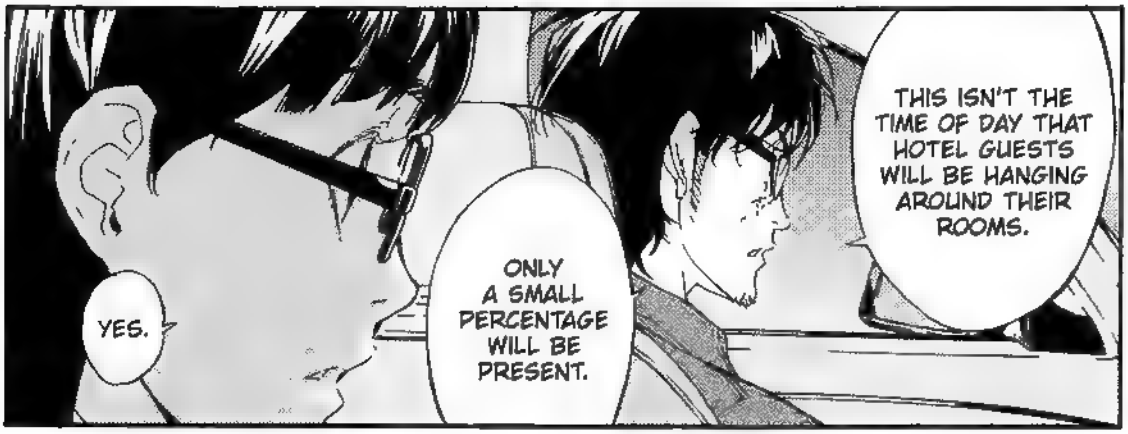
I'll send it to you, but the data upload will be rough since this is over a cellular line.
ブオオオオ
BUOOO (VRRAAA)

DO WE HAVE A FLOOR MAP OF THE HOTEL?
ガチャ
GACHA (CLICK)



...
WHAT A PAIN IN THE ASS...
That's unclear. I'd assume they're checked in under aliases.
And I'm assuming that they'll have taken disparate rooms within the building to avoid detection.
ALL RIGHT... DO WE KNOW WHERE THEY'RE SET UP?
?

I don't know further details, but I'd guess there are about twenty employees on shift as well.
It's a weekday, and there are...fifty-seven guests, including reservations.


YES.
ONLY A SMALL PERCENTAGE WILL BE PRESENT.
THIS ISN'T THE TIME OF DAY THAT HOTEL GUESTS WILL BE HANGING AROUND THEIR ROOMS.

WHATEVER'S GOING ON, I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO STICK WITH THEM.
WHATEVER, I'M ONLY ALONG FOR THE RIDE.

...

FIRST THING IS TO IDENTIFY THE FLOOR AND ROOMS.
OKAY.

What's the matter?
MUTE

THIS IS A GOOD SIGN.
MAMORU HIJIKATA IS STARTING TO LEARN FROM HER.

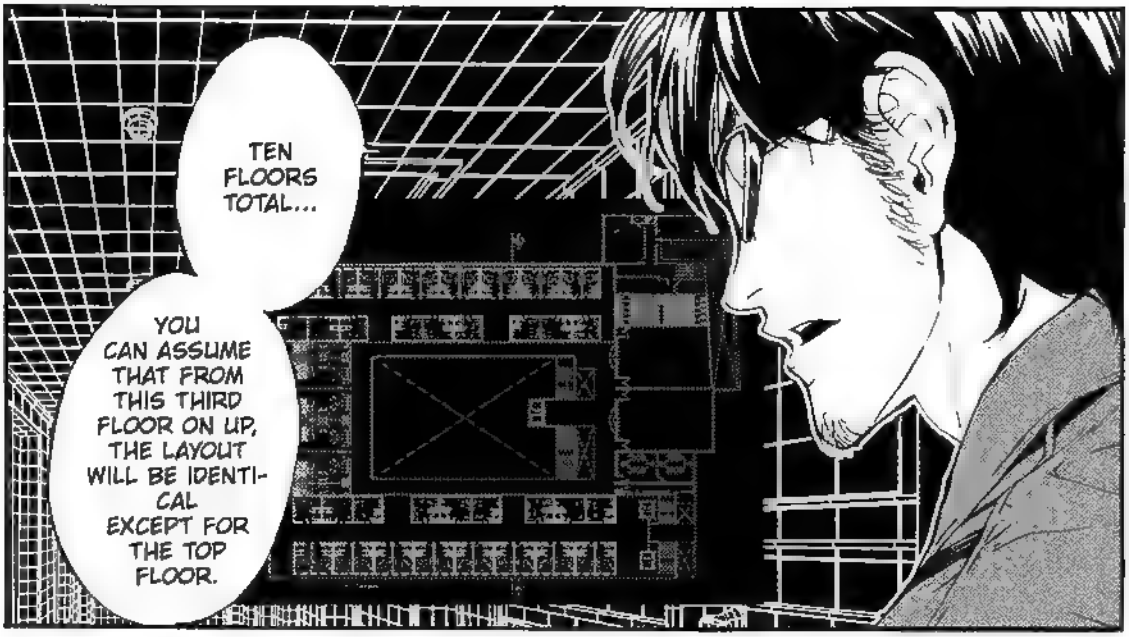
...

Yes, Master.
IF WE STAY QUIET AND LISTEN, WE'LL UNDERSTAND HIS TRAIN OF THOUGHT.
BURORORO
BUOOO (VRMM)
!
GACHA
GACHA (CLICK)
THERE.

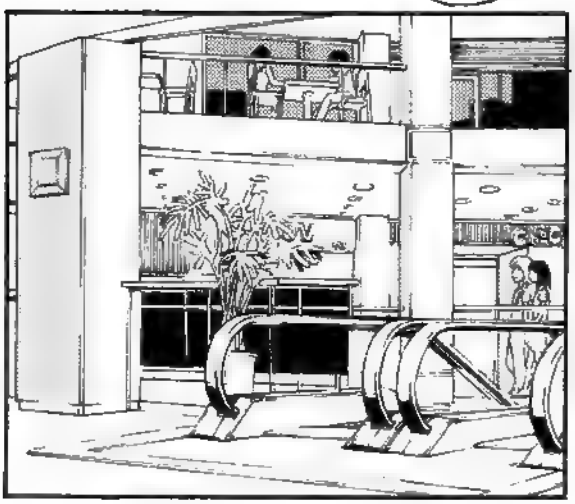
YOU'RE KIDDING! I'VE GOTTA KEEP THE GIRL SAFE IF ANY BAD SHIT GOES DOWN!
THIS DOESN'T CONCERN YOU. GO ON BACK.
WHAT-EVER YOU WANT.
KA (TOK)
JUST IN CASE THEY TRY TO ESCAPE. THEY MIGHT GRAB A DIFFERENT CAR INSTEAD, BUT THIS LIMITS THEIR OP-TIONS.
HH—
RIGHT.
SHUUU (HISS)
BASU (PSHUT)
BUSHUUU (PSHUUU)

At any time.
ANY FLOORS WITH-OUT ANY GUESTS?
CAN YOU STOP THE ELEVATOR FROM THAT SIDE?
PON (DING)
3F
UIIN (VWEE)
3F
HERE WE GO.
EXIT

DOES HE EXPECT TO BE GOING IN AND OUT...?
IF YOU'RE GONNA TAG ALONG, MEMORIZE THE BUILDING LAYOUT.
MIGHT COME IN USEFUL LATER.
AW-RIGHT.


TEN FLOORS TOTAL...
YOU CAN ASSUME THAT FROM THIS THIRD FLOOR ON UP, THE LAYOUT WILL BE IDENTICAL EXCEPT FOR THE TOP FLOOR.

FIRST BASEMENT AND THE FIRST TWO FLOORS WILL HAVE RESTAURANTS AND SHOPS.



SECOND BASEMENT LEVEL IS THE GARAGE.

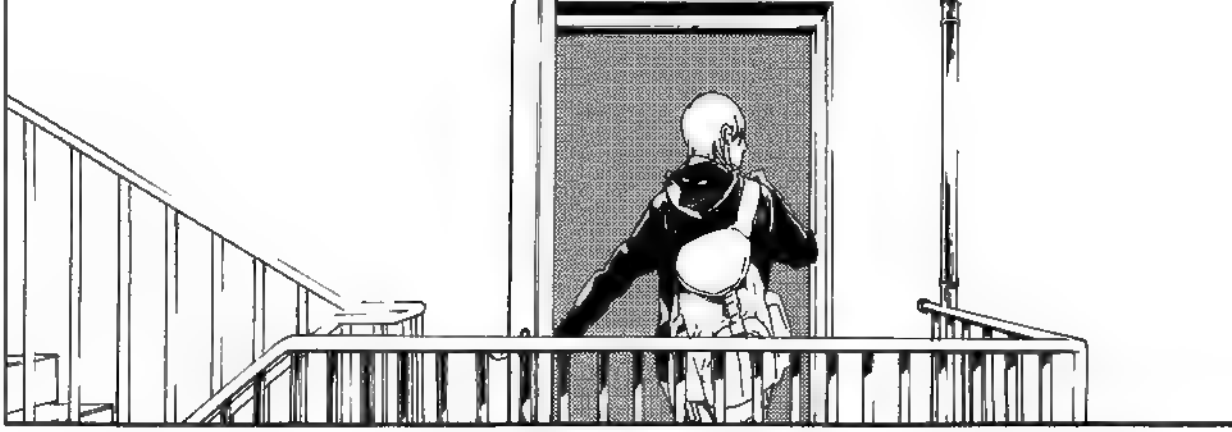
O-
OKAY.

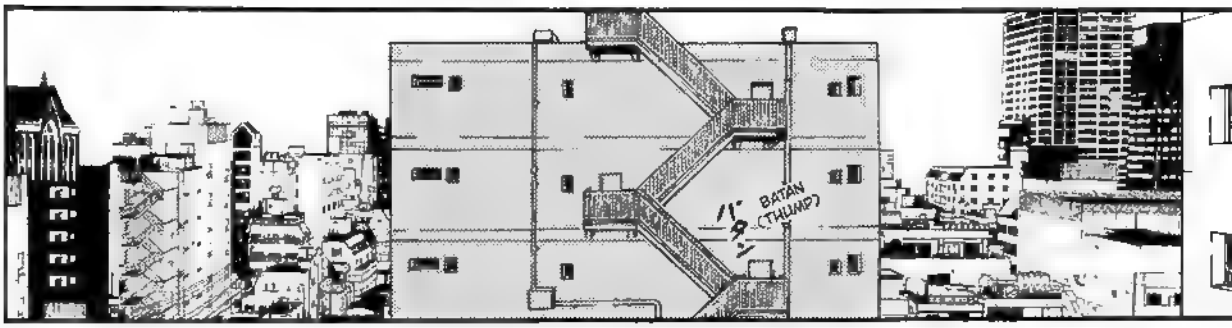
Third one's coming back, Master.

NOT BAD, AS FAR AS TIMING GOES.

BURORO
ブロロ
SUCCO (VROOM)
ブオオオオ
BUON
ガガガガ
GAGAGA (GRIDING)

GA
ガ
GA
ガ
GA
ガ
GA
ガ
GA
ガ




バタン
BATAN
(THUMP)

chapter 97

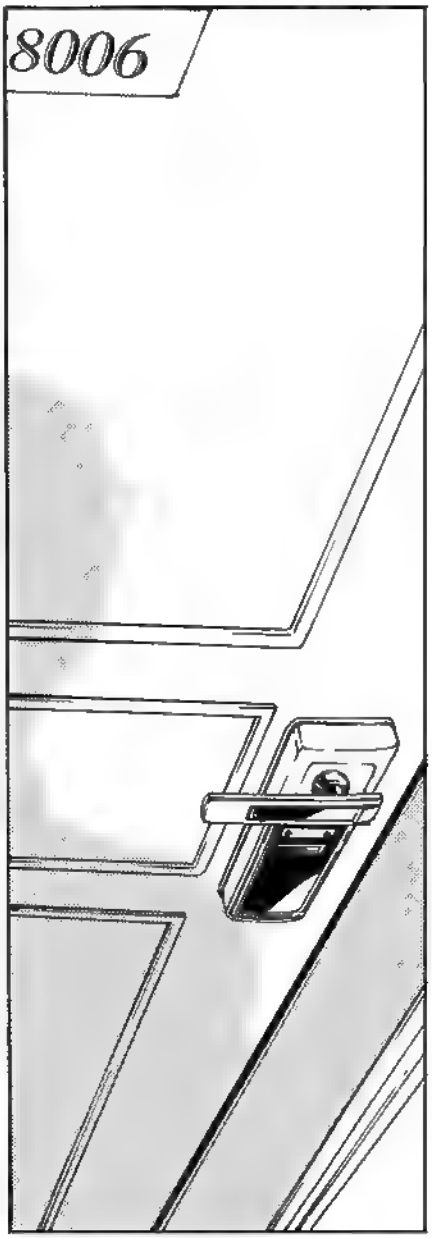
EIGHTH FLOOR.
THERE ARE FIVE FOREIGN GUESTS ON THAT FLOOR. I'LL DISPLAY THE ROOMS.
WHICH FLOOR DID HE GO TO?
8F
(BEEP)
WHICH ROOMS ARE THE BANK ROBBERS IN?
8F
ウィーン (VWEE)

...

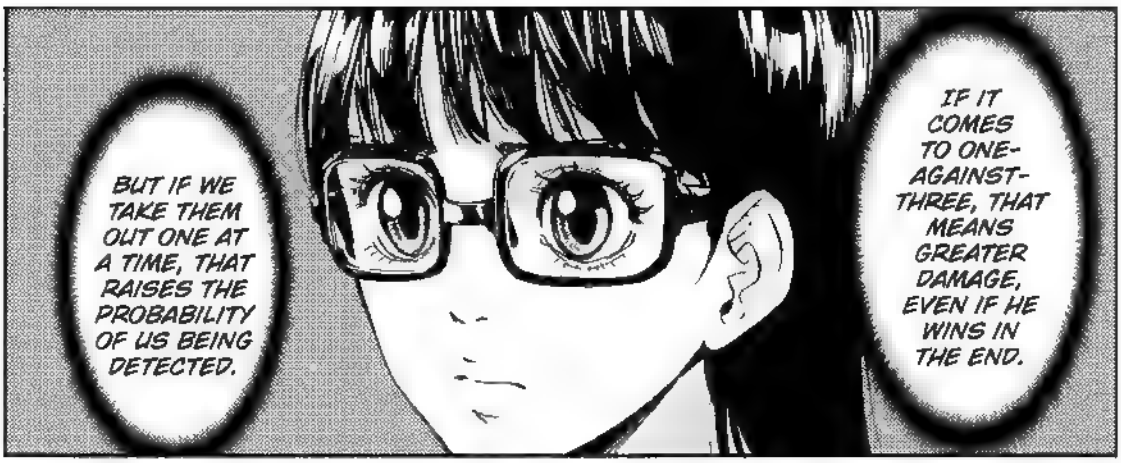
UM... HOW DO YOU KNOW?

THE SMELL. I CAN PICK UP GUN-SMOKE AND BLOOD.

I'M BETTING THE OTHERS WILL STINK THE SAME WAY.
THE IDIOT JUST COULDN'T FIRE ENOUGH ROUNDS.


8006

THE PROBLEM IS THAT MAMORU-SAN WILL BE THE ONLY COMBATANT ON OUR SIDE.


IF IT COMES TO ONE-AGAINST-THREE, THAT MEANS GREATER DAMAGE, EVEN IF HE WINS IN THE END.
BUT IF WE TAKE THEM OUT ONE AT A TIME, THAT RAISES THE PROBABILITY OF US BEING DETECTED.

WHICH MEANS WE SHOULD DO THEM ONE AT A TIME, BUT AS QUICKLY AS POS-SIBLE.
IF WE DON'T DO IT WELL, SENJI-SAN WILL WIND UP INVOLVED TOO.
...

DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME. GIVE ME MY ORDERS, LITTLE MISS.
HUH !?

...
A MAN DOESN'T GO BACK ON HIS WORD. IF I DON'T MAKE IT UP TO YOU...
...I'LL NEVER CARRY MYSELF PROUDLY AGAIN FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE!
SO... WHAT'S THE PLAN?
OKAY. IN THAT CASE, I WANT YOU TO CHARGE INTO THE FIRST ROOM, SENJI-SAN.
BE CAREFUL, THEY'RE PACKING GUNS.
I PUT THIS IN YOUR HANDS. I'M NOT GONNA COMPLAIN.
YOU'RE IN CHARGE.
...
WELL... IT'LL TAKE A LITTLE TIME...

GO AHEAD.
???
SU (SHH)
ピッ PI
ピッ PI (BEEP)
8 3 * *
THIS DOOR WON'T LOCK FOR ANOTHER HOUR.
PA (FLIK)

HUH !?

A-ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THIS!?

YOU'RE GOOD WITH SWORDS, AREN'T YOU?

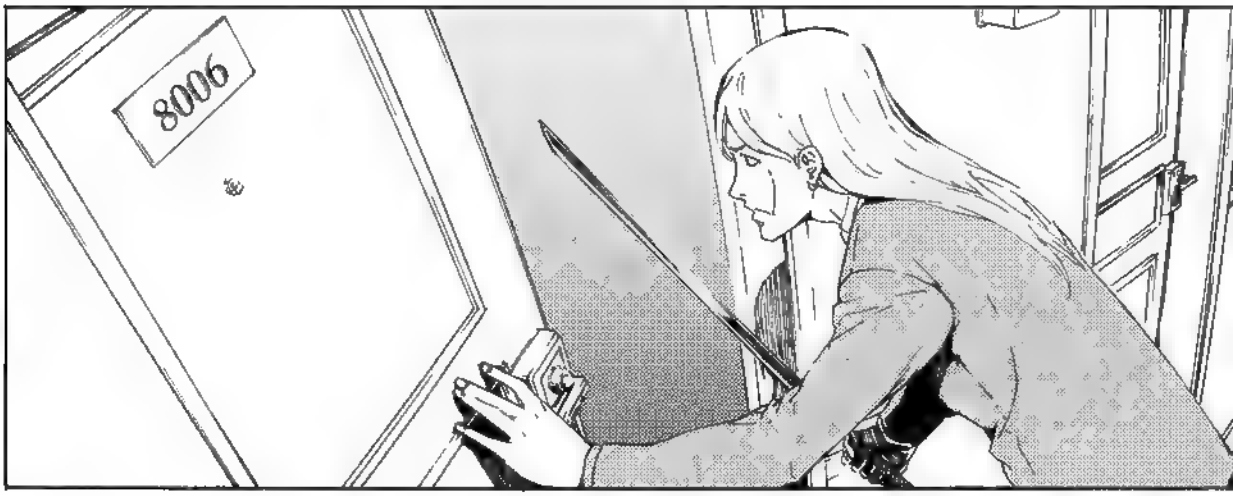
WE'LL SEE YOU IN FIVE MINUTES.
I'VE GOT OTHER WEAPONS.
BESIDES, I DON'T NEED MY BLADE TO GET THE BEST OF THESE FOOLS.
IF IT GETS DANGEROUS, JUST RUN.
UH, ARE YOU SURE?
JUST RUN...?
CLEARLY I DON'T HAVE THEIR RESPECT YET.

POKI (CRAK)
ポキ
POKI
ポキ
IN THAT CASE, I'D BETTER CRUSH THE ASSHOLE IN HERE AND EARN HER CONSIDER-ATION.
5F
I'LL GO KEEP AN EYE ON THE TARGET THE NEXT FLOOR DOWN.
THIS ONE'S IN YOUR HANDS.

ALL RIGHT. DON'T PUSH IT.
I KNOW, I KNOW.
...
?
DAIBA-SAN.
What is it?
...
キュッ
KYU (TUG)
タ (TEK)
タッ

VERY WELL.
ANYTHING YOU WISH.
I HAVE ONE REQUEST.
OKAY, SO...
SURA (SLIDE)
スラッ
RALEX

AS I FIGURED... THE BAD GUYS ARE ALWAYS EXTRA-CAUTIOUS ...
SOO (SWH)
THIS BABY CUTS MIGHTY SMOOTH. ♡
KIN (CHUNK


8006

パン
PAN
(BLAM)
...I FUCKED UP...

UMM... "I CAN'T SPEAK..."
...WHAT LANGUAGE IS THAT, ANYWAY?

<YOU THINK I DIDN'T NOTICE YOU SNOOPING AROUND OUTSIDE MY ROOM?>
<YOU'RE A GODDAMN MORON!!>

EEEP !!
A KATANA !?
UH...

GYO (JACK)
ギョッ

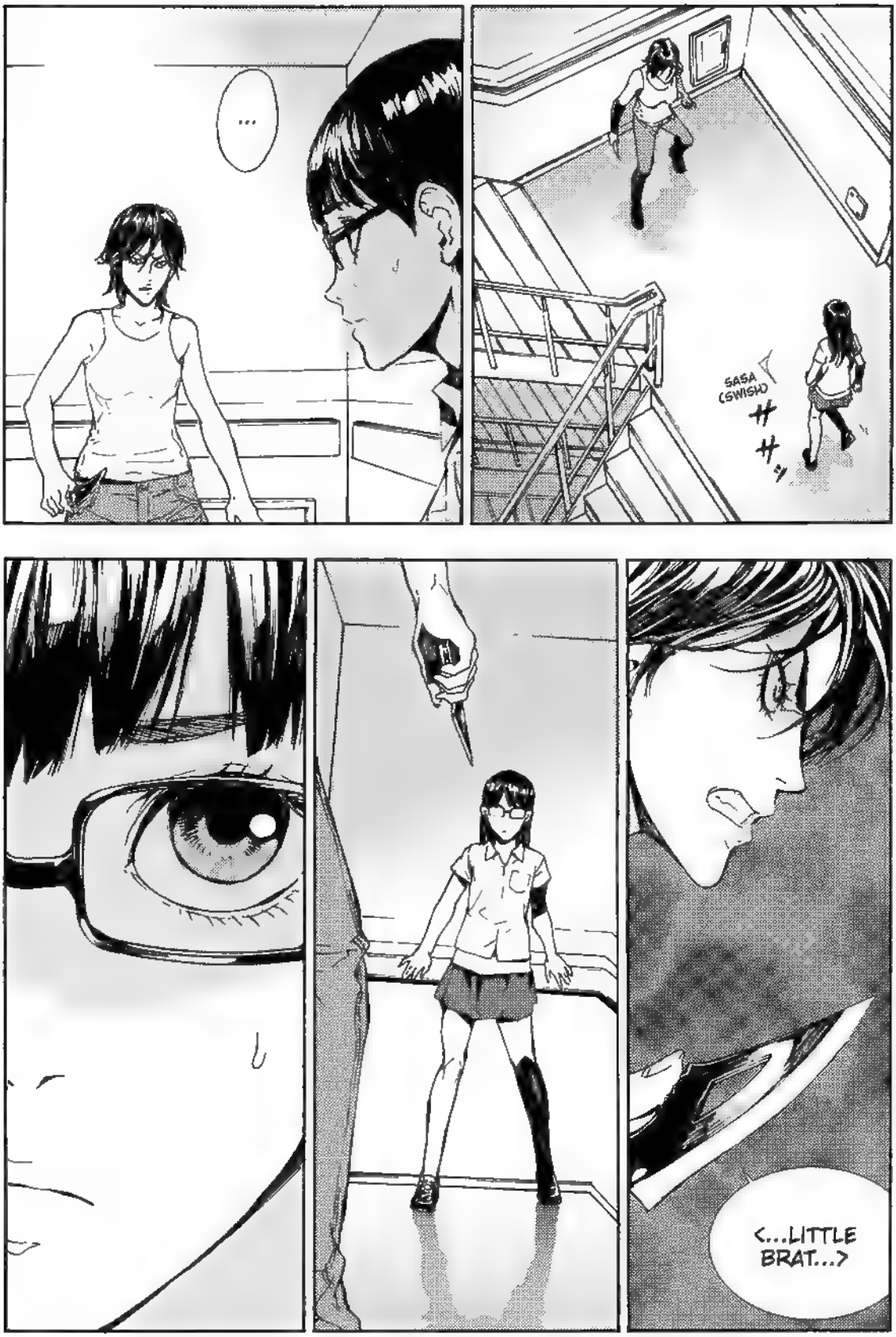
ガチャ
GACHA (CLICK)
?
WHAT WAS THAT NOISE?

HE'S SENSITIVE TO A SWORD, BUT ISN'T WORRIED ABOUT A GUN-SHOT?
BATAN ISLAND
UM ...
<I GOT ATTACKED BY A GUY WITH A SWORD.>
<HEY! YOU OKAY THERE!?>
<Was that you firing just now!?>
<HEY! WHAT'S UP!?>
<TALK TO ME!>
<What happened!?>
<I'm fine down— aaaah!!>
—...

ガチャ
(CLICK)
ダダッ
DADA
(DASH)
カチャッ
KACHA
(CLICK)

BA
(SNAG)

KASHU (SHKK)
TA (LEAP)
<WH-WHAT!?>
<WHAT ARE YOU DOING!?>
POI (TOSS)
JAKO (CH-CHUNK)
KAN (CLANG)
KAN
KAN


...
SASA (SWISH)
<...LITTLE BRAT...>

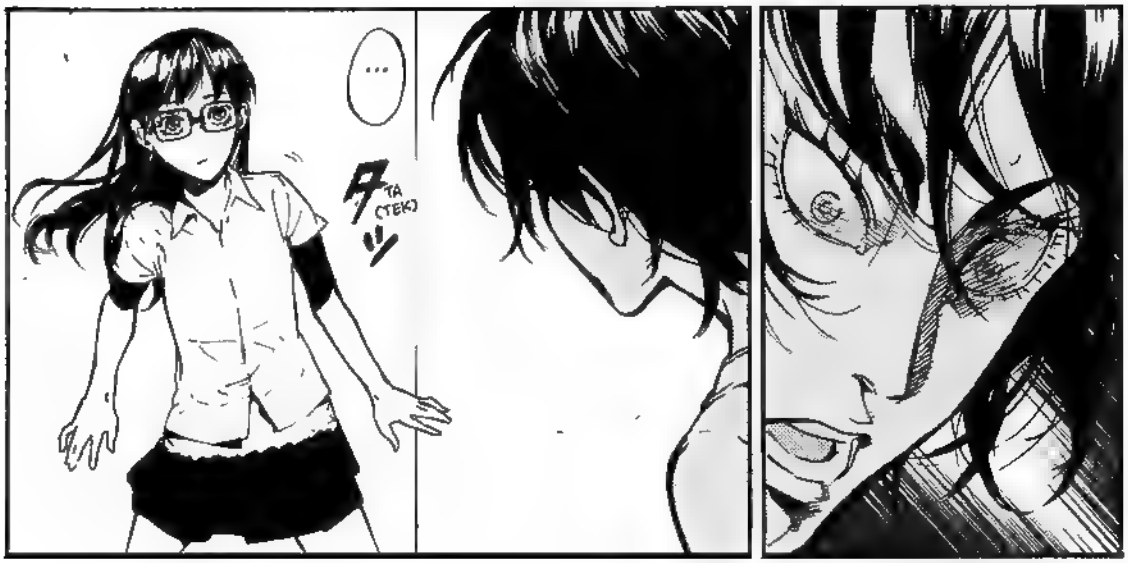
Until
Death
do us
Part

chapter 98

<LITTLE BRAT!!>
BA (SMASH)
HYUN (WHOOSH)

HYU
BUN (WHOOSH)
<SHE... DODGED!?>
<YOU'RE SO SLOW AND CLUMSY...>
TATA (LEAP)
<...SO HOW DO YOU KEEP DODGING ME!?>

SA
(DUCK)

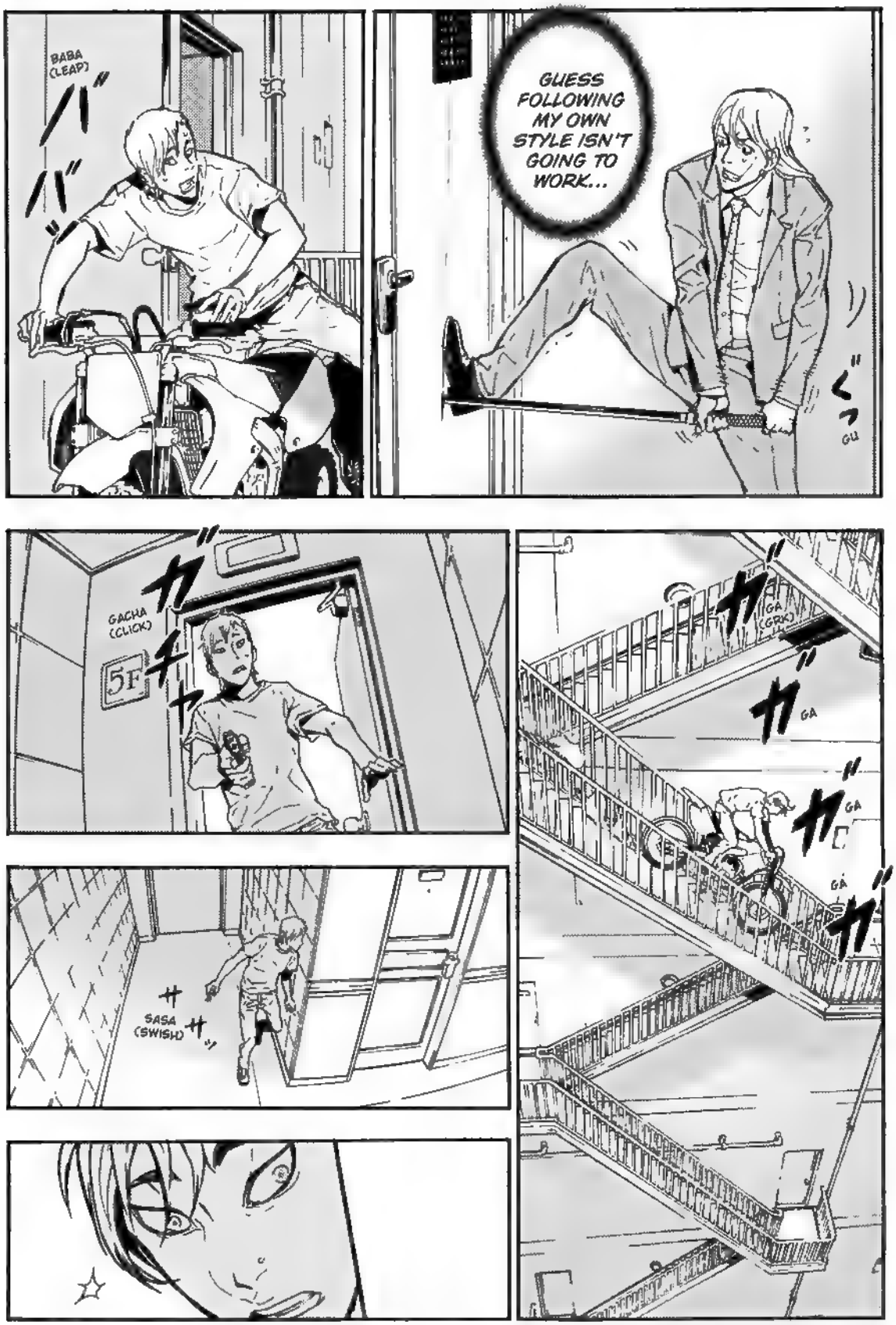

...
TA
(TEK)

I NEED TO KEEP HER OCCUPIED LONGER ...
<LITTLE... BITCH!>
8F
CHA (CHK)
チャッ

DOGA (SLAM)
RAAH!
GASHA (KSHAK)
GABA (LEAP)
CHA (CHKK)
BA (ZHM)

DOGA
BA (ROLL)
BAN (SLAM)
I GOT HIM!!
<SHIT!>

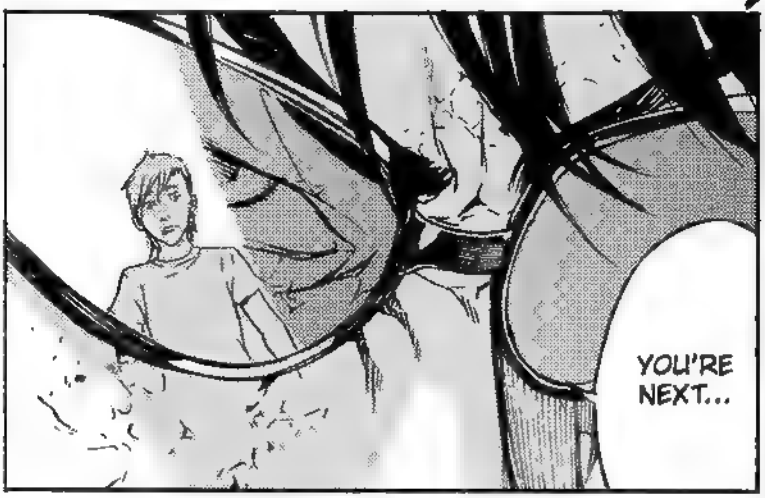
ZUGAGAGA (ZRGKK)
TA (TEK)
TA
HUH !?
GUI (TUG)
GUI
WH-WHY WON'T IT GO ANY FURTHER !?
PITA (STOP)


BABA (LEAP)
GUESS FOLLOWING MY OWN STYLE ISN'T GOING TO WORK...
GU
GACHA (CLICK)
5F
SASA (SWISH)
GA (GRK)
GA
GA
GA

AAAHH!
ZUZAZA (SLIDE)
<HEY! WHAT'S GOING ON!?>
DOSU (THUNK)

AAARGH!!
!
ド
DOSU
ド
DOSU
<AAAAGH !!>
BIKU
BIKU
<RRRGH.>
ビ

THE PEOPLE YOU SHOT SUFFERED FAR WORSE.
AAAH!
AAGHH!!
GUSHA (CRUNCH)


YOU'RE NEXT...

...

<R-RUN FOR IT...>

GA (GAKK)
<AAAHH!!>
DON
DON
DON (BLAM)
BATAN (SLAM)
WE'RE FINE HERE!
GO DOWN A FLOOR!
HEY, WHERE'S THE LITTLE LADY!?
HAA (HUFF)
HAA
OH!

I'M ON IT!!
KURU (SPIN)
I'VE GOT TO BE THE ONE TO WATCH OUT FOR HER!
SHIT.
BUOOO (VRRMM)
GACHA (CLICK)

I SEE... SO THAT WAS THE PLAN...
ATTACKING THEM INDIVIDUALLY, STAGGERING THEM TO LEAVE JUST ENOUGH TIME FOR BACKUP...
NOT BAD. NOT BAD AT ALL.
ブロロロ
(BURORORO (VRRRMM)
!?

PI (BEEP)
HERE'S YOUR CUE!
GOTCHA!
PI
PI
PI
PI
!?

SO YOU'RE THE ASS-HOLE ...
...GIVING BIKERS A BAD NAME !!
<WH-WHAT THE!?>
DOLL (BOOM)

DON (BOOM)
KYURURURU (SKREEE)
GYAN (SCREECH)
<TSK! WHAT THE HELL KIND OF BIKE IS THAT!?>
HMPH.

MYUN (WHOOSH)
<WHA—!?>
TOO SLOW!!
KURU (SPIN)
<WHAT KIND OF FREAKISH MONSTER-CYCLE IS HE RIDING!?>

YOU'RE NOT GETTIN' AWAY THAT EASY!
BLOOO (VRRM)
BLOOO
HYUN (SWOOSH)
WHA —?
BUON
<I KNOW WHAT I'M DOING TOO!>

ギュル
GYURU
(ZERO MM)
キュ
(SQUEAK)
ド
DO
(DRUM)

ZA (ZZZSH)
PAAAN (KROWW)
ZA
ZA
ZA
ZA
YOU'RE NOT HALF-BAD.
DON'T WORRY.
!

I'M GONNA TAKE YOU DOWN WITH SHEER SKILL!
BI (JAB)
IT AIN'T THE BIKE.
BUON (WHOOM)

chapter 99

TA
(TEK)
TA
TA
<FUCK!?
DADA
(DASH)
I HAVE TO BUY MORE TIME...
TA
TA
B2

<THE GAME'S UP, GIRL!>
<I'LL CLOSE IN IF SHE TRIES TO SPIN AROUND AND OPEN THE DOOR TO ESCAPE!>
B2
BUWA (WHOOSH)
KURU (SPIN)

<WHA—>
DON=
(BWAM)
YAH!!
...I DID IT...
DOSA
(THWUD)
DOKA
(SLAM)

I DID IT RIGHT, SENSE!!
<RRGH ...>
HUH !?
(JUMP)
THUMP

BUGOO (VRRM)
GAGA (GRRK)

ZAZAZA (ZSGUHO)
GYUN (JWOOH)
HYUNA (THWARK)
HUH (SCREED)

BUUUU (VRRR)
HYUUU (WHOOSH)
GYAGYAGYA (SCREEL)
DAN (WHAM)
!?
BA (ZIP)

!
!?
ドゴ
ゴゴ

<WHAT!?>
YOU'RE NOT GET-TIN' AWAY!
>trial mode
ピー PII (BEEP)
BA -(ZMM)
ガラ GARA (RATTLE)
-GARA
ガラ
ウィーン (VWEE)

DAN (DMP)
KIIIING (SCREECH)
DAN
DAN
GASHA (KSHUNK)

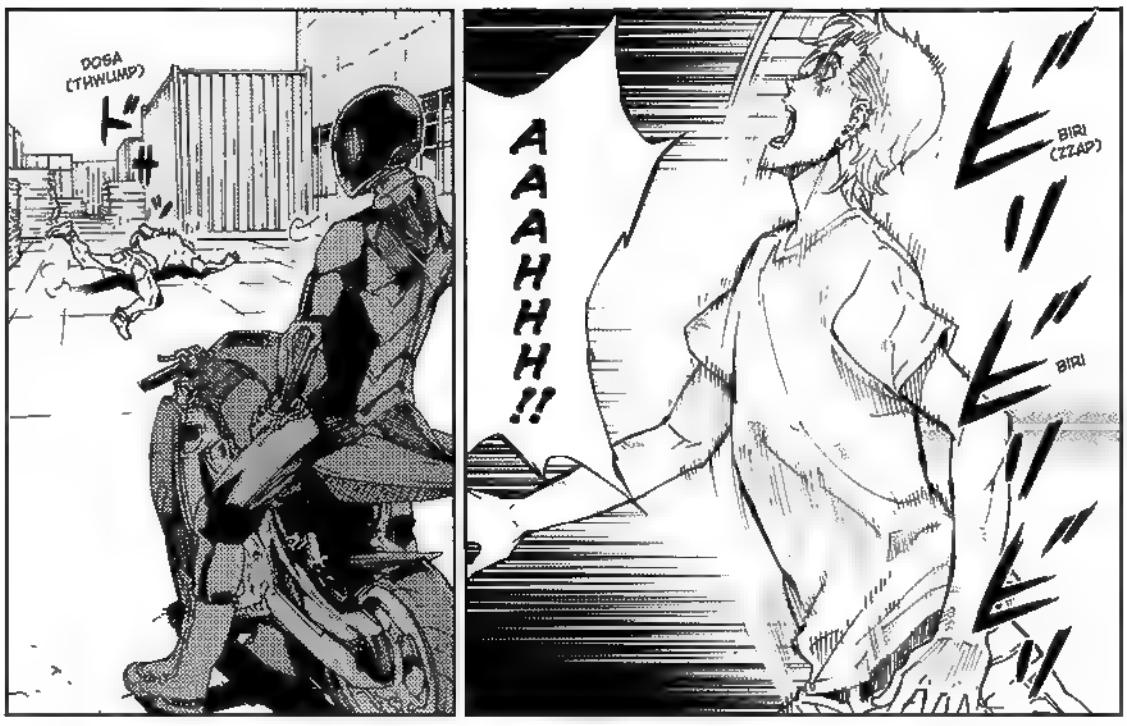
(CAN THAT MASSIVE BIKE EVEN MAKE A JUMP??
DAN
DAN (THUMP)
(HUH??
?
BO (BMP)
BO
BO
BO

GO (THWLO)
(SHIT!)
HYU (SWISH)
DOGAGA (DGSHH)
GYAGYAGYA (SCREEE)

AAGH!
POOM (SLAM)
GOT HIM!
AAAH!

I SEE... THE CLOSER I AM TO THE ENEMY, THE FURTHER HE HAS TO MOVE HIS EYES TO KEEP ME IN FOCUS, WHICH GIVES ME AN ADVANTAGE.

DON'T KNOW WHEN YOU'RE BEAT, DO YOU?
PII (BEEP)
YORO (WOBBLE)


DOSA (THWUMP)
AAAHHH!!
BIRI (ZZAP)
BIRI

BUSHUU (SSSHT)
!?
GAHH!
SENJI-SAN!
DOKA (THWACK)
TAKE THAT!!

I'VE BEEN LOOKING ALL OVER FOR YOU...
タッ
TA (TEK)
ドサ
DOSA (THUMP)
I'M SO GLAD MY PREDICTION WAS RIGHT ...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'D HAVE DONE IF YOU GOT HURT REALLY BAD...
WELL...
...I'M JUST GLAD I MADE IT IN TIME...
...
KYU (TIE)
キュッ

THANK YOU.
AWW, YOU'RE BLOWIN' THINGS OUTTA PROPOR-TION...
JUST SLAP A BANDAGE ON THIS SCRATCH, AND IT'LL BE FINE!
BUSHU (BSSHT)
AH—
PEKO (PON)
MY PLEASURE! THAT'S ALL I WANT TO HEAR...
WAIT, WHY ARE YOU THANKING ME? IT MAKES NO SENSE.
...
UM...
BECAUSE I'M NOT WORTHY OF YOUR CON-SIDERATION.

AISORA MEDICAL UNIVERSITY
SIGN: ORTHOPEDIC SURGERY/ 2ND REHABILITATION / TECHNOLOGY & RESEARCH LAB
SIGN: SUPERVISOR HIROYUKI SAWATARI
THE SAWATARI LAB DEVELOPS CUTTING-EDGE MECHANICAL PROSTHETIC LIMBS FOR ACCIDENT VICTIMS, RIGHT?
AND A PROTOTYPE WAS STOLEN TWO NIGHTS AGO?
MY HUNCH SAYS THE "PLUNDERERS" ARE BEHIND THIS.
PLUNDER-ERS...
ISN'T THAT...?

THEY WERE WIPED OUT BY SOME MYSTERY FORCE, BUT CONTINUE TO WREAK HAVOC IN OTHER COUNTRIES.
SEEMS THE ORGANIZATION AS A WHOLE IS MUCH LARGER THAN WE'VE BEEN THINKING.
Ex Solid
THEY'RE AN INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL GANG THAT TARGETED SEVERAL HIGH-TECH JAPANESE COMPANIES, STARTING WITH EX-SOLID FOUR MONTHS AGO.
DOES SEEM LIKE THE PROS-THETICS THEFT IS RELATED, BUT...
EDGE TURUS WAS NOTHING MORE THAN A SIMPLE OFFICER IN THEIR MIDST.
GOES DEEPER THAN YOU THOUGHT, RIGHT?
!?
JUST THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG.

SO... YOU'RE GIVING UP ON THIS?
I'LL BE HONEST. THIS IS BEYOND THE SCOPE OF THE POLICE.
SAME FOR THE SDF— THEY'RE BUILT FOR DEFENSE. WE NEED TRUE MILITARY FORCE.
WHY WOULD YOU TELL ME THIS?
I DIDN'T THINK SO.
...
THEY'RE EVEN WORSE THAN THE ELEMENT NETWORK AND HIJIKATA.
I WANT YOUR HELP, "TATE THE AEGIS." I DON'T WANT THESE BASTARDS ROAMING JAPAN.

ALL DONE.
GASHA (KSHAK)
ガシャッ
KACHA
KACHA (CLICK)
IT MIGHT BE OUTSIDE OF YOUR NORMAL "PROTECTOR" WORK, BUT I WANT YOU TO CONSIDER THIS A PERSONAL REQUEST FROM ME.
VERY WELL.
I JUST HAVE TO GET BACK THE STO-LEN LIMB, RIGHT?
YES, BEFORE MY PROTOTYPE IS USED FOR EVIL.
I DON'T EVER WANT TO FEEL THAT WAY AGAIN.

BA (SWISH)
...
SU (SHH)
ガチャ
GACHA (CLICK)
SO DO WE HAVE A DEAL?
WAIT, TATE.
I NEED TO TELL YOU ABOUT THE NEW TECH PACKED INTO THE "NOBODY."

Until
Death
do us
Part

WAIT A SECOND!
WHY ARE YOU ALL ALONE?
CALLING HIS OWN SHOTS AGAIN...
OH, MAMORU-SAN IS COMING BACK SEPARATELY. HE TOLD US TO GO FIRST.
HUH?
CAN I USE YOUR COMPUTER FOR A BIT?
SURE, BUT...

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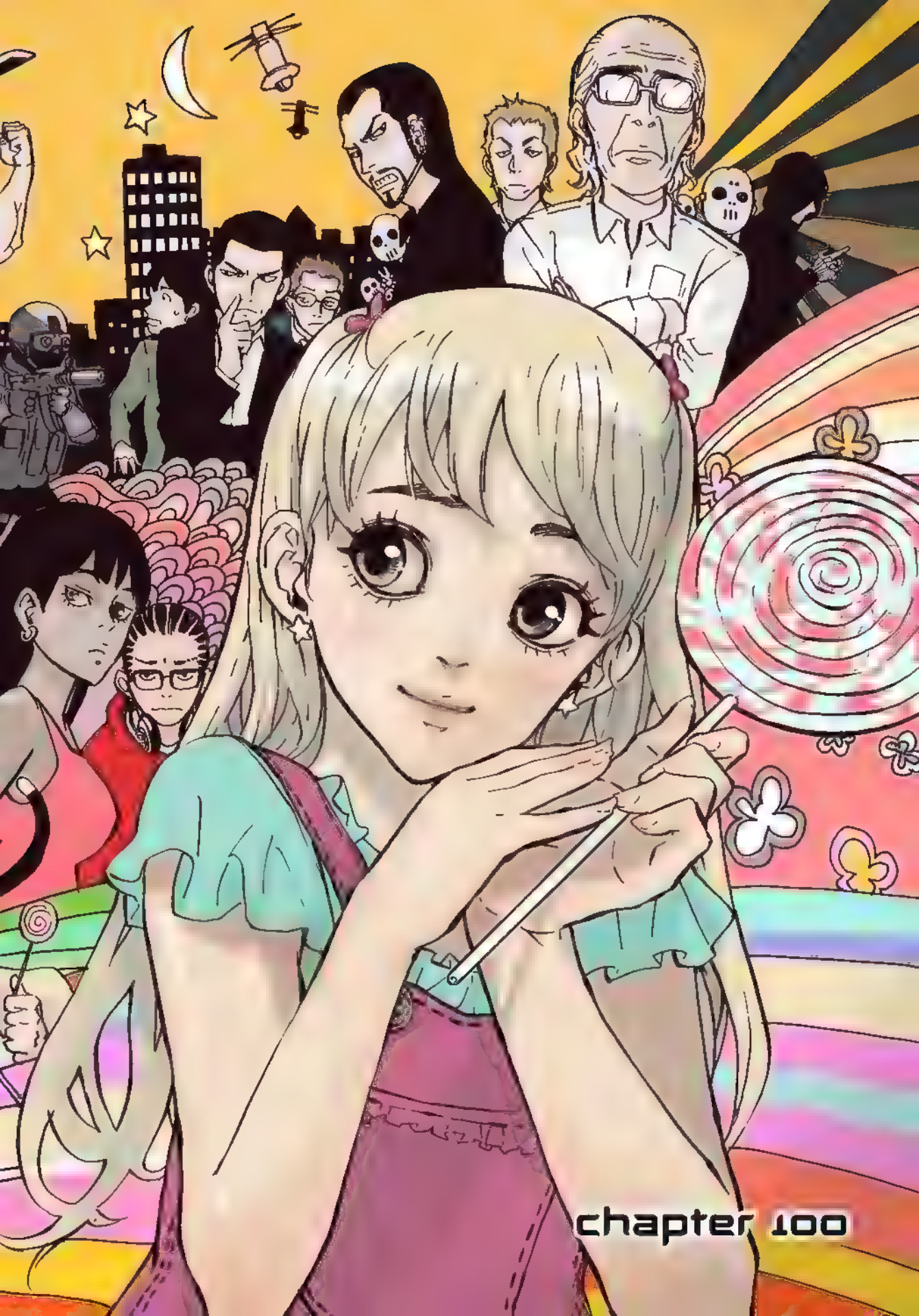

chapter 100

Until
Death
do us
Part

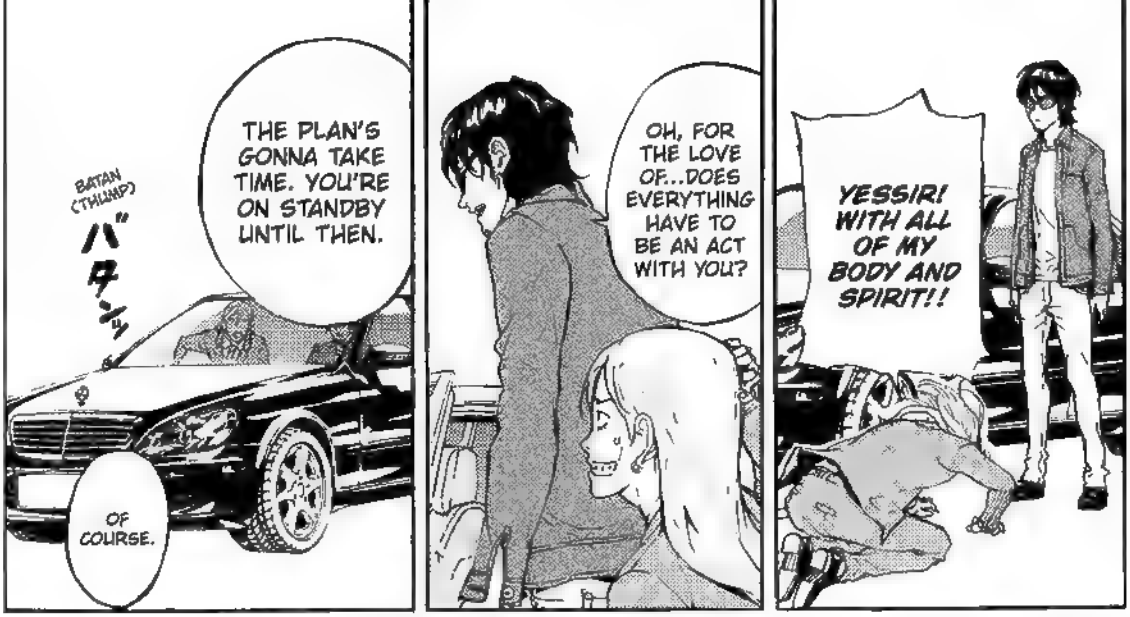
I SAW A BIT OF WHAT YOU'RE MADE OF BACK THERE.
IF YOU DON'T MIND, COULD YOU HELP ME WITH SOMETHING?
ブオオオオ
BUOOO (VRMM)
YOU KNOW PEOPLE ARE AFTER HARUKA, RIGHT?
Y-YEAH?
MAN, THIS IS CREEPING ME OUT!
HEH.
H-HELP YOU...?
WH-WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO?

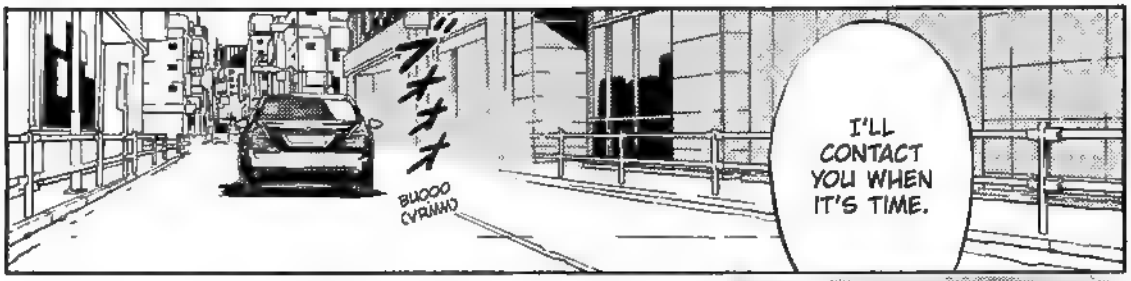
ブオオオ
BLOOOM (RRRR)
AND HAVE YOU HEARD WHY?
NO, THERE WAS A GAG ORDER PUT DOWN. ONLY THE OLD MAN AND KOMURA THE WAKA-GASHIRA KNOW.
AHH... I FIGURED AS MUCH.
HARUKA HAS PRECOGNITION.
HUH ???
IT'S TRUE. SHE SEES THE FUTURE. JUST LOOK AT THE RIDICULOUS BOUNTY ON HER HEAD AS PROOF.
NOW ROACHES AND RATS THE WORLD OVER ARE CRAWLING OUT OF THE WOODWORK TO GET THAT MONEY.
ARE YOU SERI-OUS!?
THAT'S WHY SHE HAS TO HANG AROUND WITH A SWORD-SWINGING FOOL LIKE ME—IT'S THE ONLY WAY SHE CAN SURVIVE.
AND THIS WAS ALL...OUR FAULT...

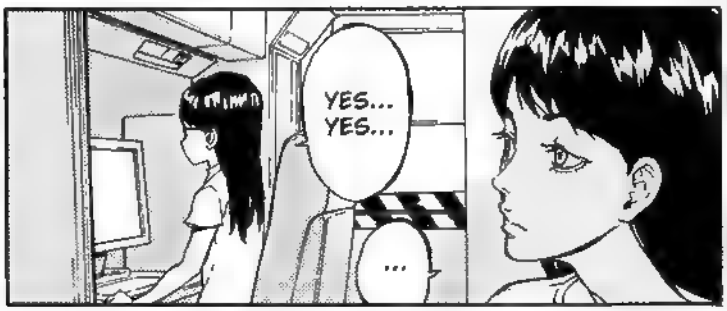
AND OUR PLAN IS TO FREE HARUKA FROM THIS THREAT AND RETURN HER TO NORMAL LIFE.
AND YOU THINK YOU CAN SAVE HER FROM THAT FATE?
EXACTLY!
...!

UH... SURE...
KIRAN (SPARKLE)
...YOU THINK I'M THE RIGHT MAN FOR THE JOB?
...
DO I TAKE THIS TO MEAN...
KIKIKI (SCREECH)
I'LL FOLLOW YOU TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH!
?
TSUKA
TSUKA (STOMP)
TSUKA

NOT THAT AGAIN.
A MAN NEVER GOES BACK ON HIS WORD!
THANKS, BUT NO THANKS.
GACHA (CLICK)
I CAN'T GUARANTEE YOUR SAFETY.
ALL RIGHT...
SENJI TAMAGAWA NEVER GOES BACK ON HIS WORD.
A GUY WHO CAN'T CLAIM HE'S A MAN WITHOUT RAMBLING ON AND ON ABOUT "WHAT A MAN DOES" IS THE LEAST WORTHY OF THE TITLE. YOU EXPECT ME TO TRUST YOU ON THIS?
I CAN'T GUARANTEE YOUR SAFETY, BUT I DON'T WANT YOU DYING.
LAST THING HARUKA NEEDS IS MORE TEARS.
OH... REALLY?


THE PLAN'S GONNA TAKE TIME. YOU'RE ON STANDBY UNTIL THEN.
BATAN (THUMP)
バタン
OF COURSE.
OH, FOR THE LOVE OF...DOES EVERYTHING HAVE TO BE AN ACT WITH YOU?
YESSIR! WITH ALL OF MY BODY AND SPIRIT!!


I'LL CONTACT YOU WHEN IT'S TIME.
BUOOO (VRMM)


YES... YES...
...

BUOOO

ALL RIGHT. SO I SHOULD CHECK IN AT A LATER POINT, THEN?

PROBABLY THE BIG BOSS...
WHO'S SHE TALKING TO?
HOW WOULD I KNOW?
CAPTAIN DAIBA ONLY TELLS YOU WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW, SO YOU'VE GOT TO PAY ATTENTION. ISN'T THAT OBVIOUS?
YOU CAN ALWAYS TELL WHEN THE ORDINARY CALL-AND-RESPONSE LINES ARE OVERLY POLITE AND RESPONSIVE.
WHAT MAKES YOU SO SURE?
I DON'T KNOW HIM EITHER. OF COURSE, IT'S THE NETWORK'S STYLE TO AVOID UNNECESSARY CONTACT.
LOOK, I'VE ONLY TALKED TO THE GUY DIRECTLY ONCE.
HOW WOULD I KNOW THAT?

OF...OF COURSE I DO.
I GUESS YOU GET SPECIAL TREATMENT.
IN THAT CASE...
YES.
We didn't expect her to provide us with a plan for the future, did we, Master?
NOPE.
PI (BEEP)
...I WILL BE AWAITING OUR CONTACT LATER. GOOD-BYE.
Bye.

...WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT THE NECESSITY OF OUR ABNORMAL ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE...
...WE OUGHT TO TAKE THE WORST-CASE SCENARIO INTO ACCOUNT.
AND IN COMPARISON TO OUR PLAN, HER PROPOSED STRATEGY SEEMS TO READ TWO MOVES AHEAD OF OUR OWN.
IT'S A VERY USEFUL SUGGESTION, BUT...
...
KYU (WIPE)
キュッ
キュッ
KYU
Yes, Master.
WE OUGHT TO EXPLORE A VARIETY OF POTENTIAL CHANGES BEFORE WE MEET WITH HER AGAIN.

STOP... STOP !!
HUFF!
HUFF!
HUFF

AAAAH!!
HAHH
SAD, MAN.
I'LL KILL HIM!
I'LL KILL HIM!!

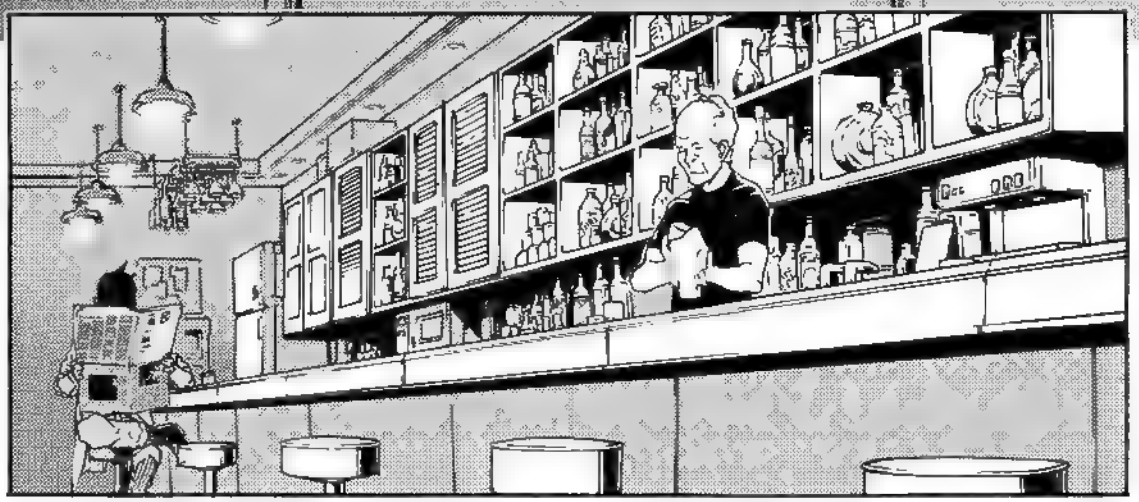
YOU
Bam Bam
Bam Bam
WHO'S THERE !?
Bam Bam
I'VE NEVER THOUGHT OF YOU AS A BROTHER!!
DON'T CALL ME "BRO"!
THAT'S RIGHT, BRO. IT'S ME, LITTLE GENE.
Bam
Bam Bam
SERIOUSLY? YOU GONNA TURN THE COLD SHOULDER ON THE GUY BRINGIN' YOU THIS?

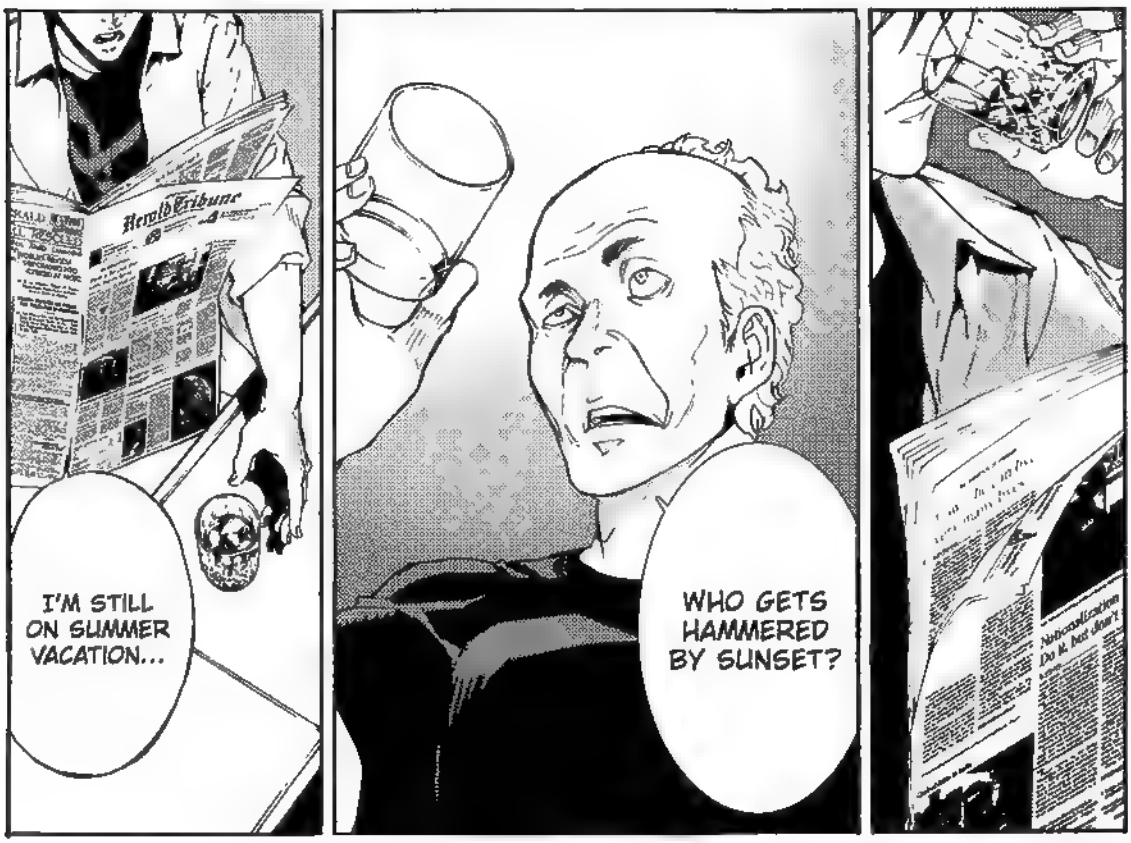
PERSONAL FAVORITE OF "TATE THE AEGIS"— CAPABLE OF STOPPING A MAGNUM BULLET COLD!
THIS IS A CUTTING-EDGE PROSTHETIC LIMB, BRO. IT READS THE ELECTRIC SIGNALS FROM YOUR CONNECTIVE MUSCLES AND WORKS JUST LIKE A REGULAR ARM.
BUT I'M JUST IN THE RECON STAGE, CHECKIN' EVERYTHING BEFORE THE CAVALRY ARRIVES.
BONG!
MY PERSONAL QUEST IS FOR YOUR HIDDEN TREASURE. I WANT YOUR PERSONAL STUFF, WHAT YOU'VE BEEN COLLECTING FOR YEARS.
GOOD CALL. THAT WAS THE MISSION GIVEN TO ME WHEN I GOT PUT IN YOUR OLD POSITION.
WHAT'S YOUR PLAN HERE? IF YOU'RE HERE, IT MEANS GALBOA IS TARGETING JAPAN AGAIN.
ARE YOU GOING TO TAKE MY LIFE TOO, WHILE YOU'RE AT IT!?

YEP. SO I JUST WANNA MAKE SURE YOU'RE GONNA PAY OUT THAT BOUNTY YOU PUT ON THE SAMURAI AND THE GIRL, EVEN IF IT'S TO A DESPICABLE SCUMBAG LIKE ME.
YOU'RE GOING TO HAND THAT TO THE OLD MAN AND CLAIM THE INHERITANCE !?
BINGO!
IT'S A DEAL..
..ALL RIGHT
IF YOU CAN TAKE HIM DOWN...
...IT'S YOURS.

Beat
Bum Bum
MEANING YOU'VE GOTTA HATE THAT GUY MORE THAN YOU HATE ME
YOU'RE DAMN RIGHT!

NEST OF GEESE





FOUR MONTHS SINCE YOU CAME TO JAPAN...
...AND YOU FINALLY MADE YOUR WAY HERE...
KII (CREAK)
...
...THOMAS JEFFERSON.
IS THAT HOW LONG IT TOOK FOR YOU TO MAKE SOME TIME?

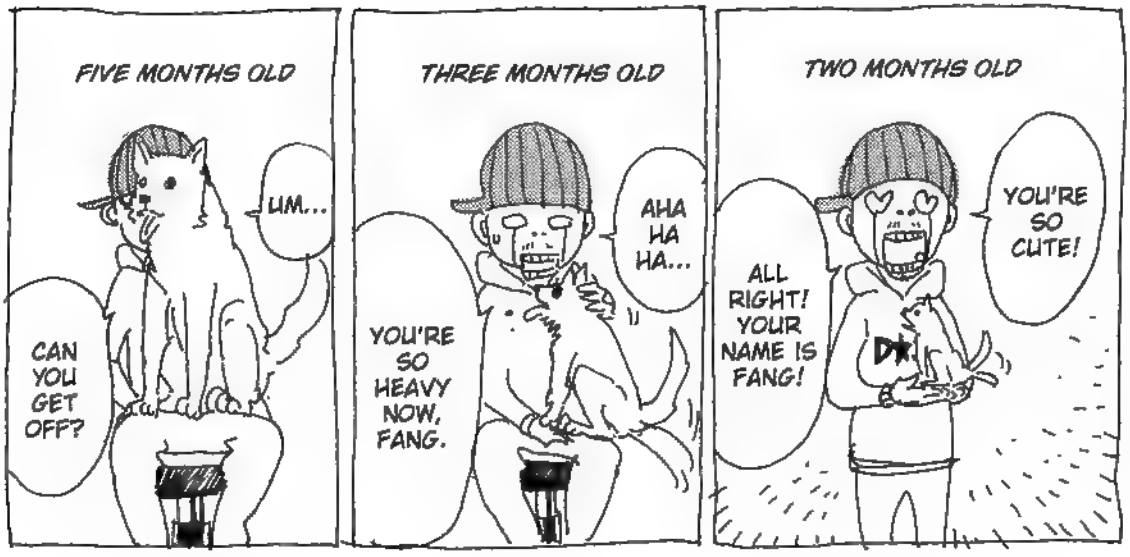
BUT THE REASON I'M HERE IS TO ASK YOUR HELP IN GETTING MY NEXT JOB OFF THE GROUND.
YOU'VE ALWAYS HAD YOUR EAR TO THE GROUND, OLD GOOSE.
YOUR INFORMATION NETWORK EVEN SURPASSES THE ELEMENT NETWORK'S WHEN IT COMES TO THE UNDERGROUND.
ELEMENT NETWORK ...?

WHAT'S HE HAVING... BOURBON?
TWO OF THE SAME—ONE FOR HIM.
WHAT'LL IT BE?
PASA (FLAP)
I'M SCARED...
NOW, NOW...
THIS IS SIMPLY A SIGN OF MY APPRECIATION AT FINALLY COMING ACROSS ONE OF THE FINEST HIRED KILLERS WORKING TODAY...
I FEEL LIKE A DRINK FROM YOU WILL COST ME.
KOTO (THUNK)

until death do us part ⑥ – end

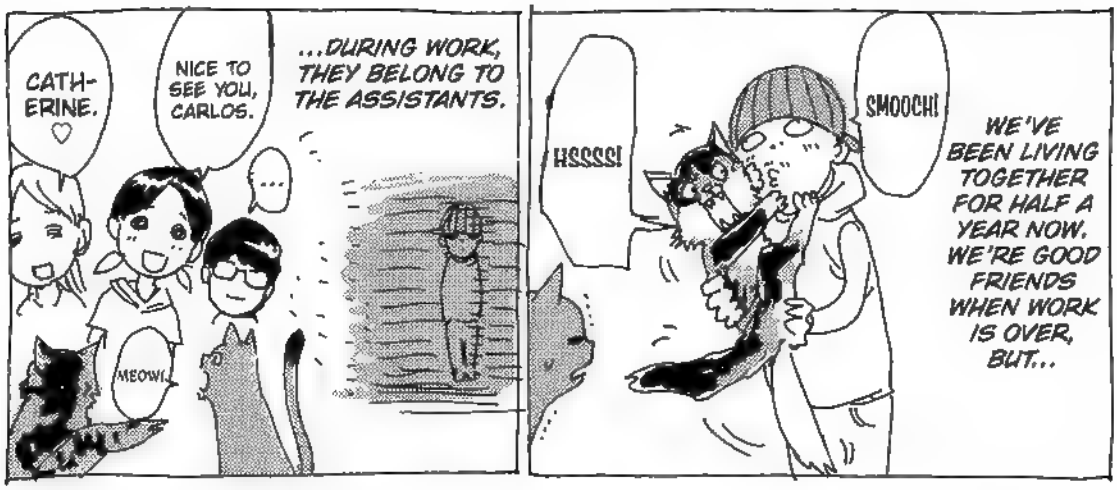
Until
Death
do us
Part

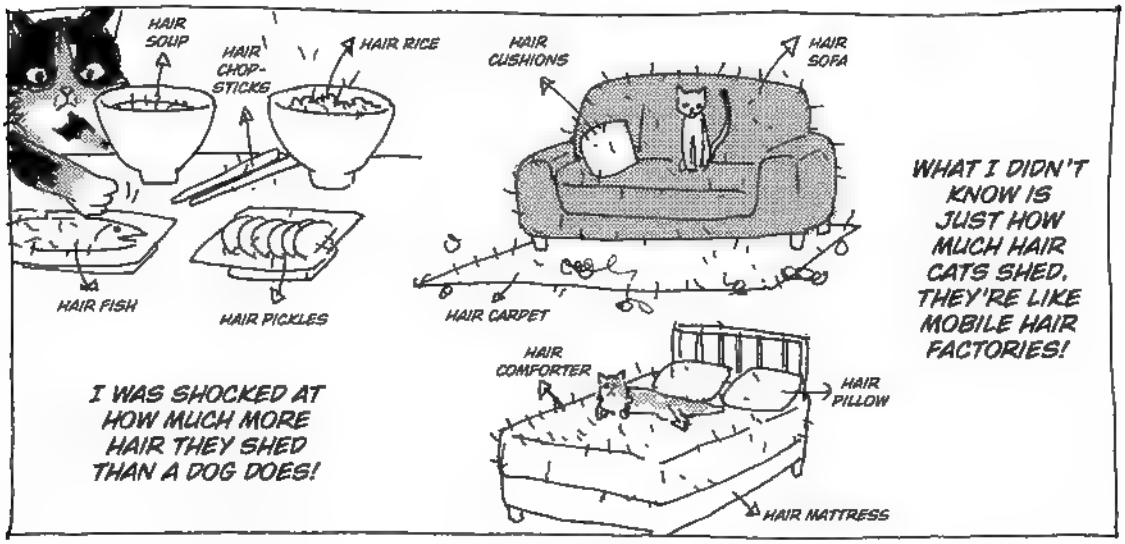
AT ONE POINT, MY DOG FANG, BORN FROM A MALTESE MOTHER AND MUTT FATHER, WAS A TINY LITTLE PUPPY I COULD HOLD IN THE PALM OF MY HAND...

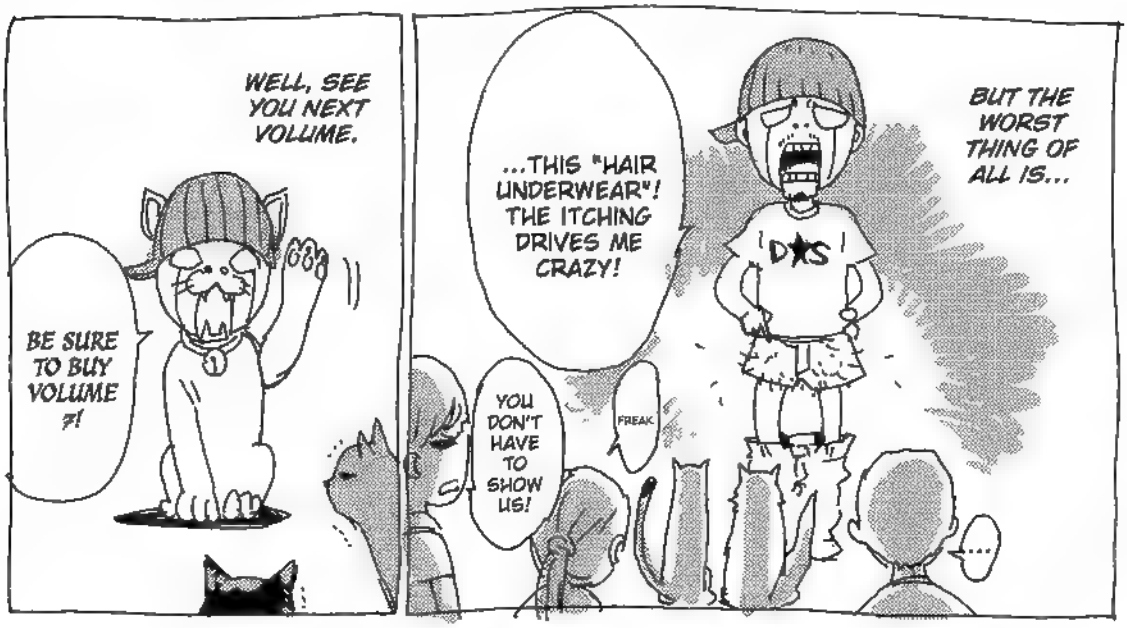


WOOF.
BE A GOOD BOY OVER THERE, FANG!
I'LL COME AND PLAY WITH YOU SOON! DON'T FORGET ABOUT ME!
ONCE HE BECAME TOO LARGE TO LIVE IN THE LEASED APARTMENT I USE AS A WORK STUDIO, I HAD TO FOSTER HIM OFF TO MY PARENTS' HOUSE...
WHAT'S WRONG, SENSEI? DID YOU FIND ANOTHER ONE OF FANG'S THINGS?
Y-YEAH...
LOOK WHAT I FOUND... BEHIND THE TV...
FANG...
?
THE VOID THAT WAS LEFT WHEN I LOST MY BELOVED ROOMMATE WAS GREATER THAN I COULD HAVE IMAGINED. I WAS FILLED WITH SADNESS EVERY TIME I SPOTTED TRACES OF HIM LEFT BEHIND...
POOR GUY... IT MUST HAVE BEEN REALLY HARD TO SQUEEZE BEHIND THERE TO DROP A LOAD...
LOOK, IT'S STILL WARM AND STINKY!
A GIANT PILE OF FANG TURDS...

SO ANYWAY, NOW WE'VE GOT SOME CATS!
THERE'S FUZZY MOLD ON IT TOO...
STOP THAT!
EVEN NOW, _TWO YEARS LATER...
SOB... MORE POOP UNDER THE BATHTUB...
CATHERINE L'PREMIERE ("CATHERINE"), AN AMERICAN CURL FEMALE, BORN NOVEMBER 14TH, 2009. HER NICKNAME IS "MAD CAT."
D★S MUTT ♂
CARLOS DE LA ROCHA ("CARLOS"), AN ABYSSINIAN MALE, BORN APRIL 30TH, 2009. HIS NICKNAMES ARE "GENTLEMEOW" AND "TSUNDERE-NYAN."
THAT'S CREEPY... NO, SCARY!
THE RESULT...
HE'S BEEN WATCHING FOR TWO HOURS...
WHAT IS THAT VOICE HE'S MAKING?
Nee hee.
Meow!
Meow!
I HAD CAUGHT THE BUG...
EEEK!
THEY LOVE BROWSING CAT SITES WHEN THEY HAVE FREE TIME, AND MY INTEREST WAS PIQUED BY THEIR EXCITEMENT...
THEY'RE SO CUTE! ♡
HMM ?
WHAT? WHAT'S UP?
I USED TO HATE CATS. THE ONLY REASON I HAVE TWO OF THEM NOW IS MY ASSISTANTS.


CATH-ERINE.
NICE TO SEE YOU, CARLOS.
...DURING WORK, THEY BELONG TO THE ASSISTANTS.
MEOW!
HSSSS!
SMOOCH!
WE'VE BEEN LIVING TOGETHER FOR HALF A YEAR NOW. WE'RE GOOD FRIENDS WHEN WORK IS OVER, BUT...


HAIR SOUP
HAIR CHOP-STICKS
HAIR RICE
HAIR FISH
HAIR PICKLES
HAIR CUSHIONS
HAIR SOFA
HAIR CARPET
HAIR COMFORTER
HAIR PILLOW
HAIR MATTRESS
I WAS SHOCKED AT HOW MUCH MORE HAIR THEY SHED THAN A DOG DOES!
WHAT I DIDN'T KNOW IS JUST HOW MUCH HAIR CATS SHED. THEY'RE LIKE MOBILE HAIR FACTORIES!


WELL, SEE YOU NEXT VOLUME.
BE SURE TO BUY VOLUME 7!
...THIS "HAIR UNDERWEAR"! THE ITCHING DRIVES ME CRAZY!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO SHOW US!
FREAK
BUT THE WORST THING OF ALL IS...
D★S

Art Staff
Suri ♀: Chief Assistant
0-Second ♂: Background Art
Taurus ♀: Background Art

Military Advisor
Lee Hyun Seok (warmania)

SPECIAL THANKS
Shingo Takano

Crossover Planning
JESUS—Sajin Kouro, Yami no Aegis, Akatsuki no Aegis
Written by Kyouichi Nanatsuki,
Art by Yoshihide Fujiwara
(Shogakukan)

Translation Notes

Common Honorifics
no honorific: Indicates familiarity or closeness; if used without permission or reason, addressing someone in this manner would constitute an insult.
***-san*:** The Japanese equivalent of Mr./Mrs./Miss. If a situation calls for politeness, this is the fail-safe honorific.
***-sama*:** Conveys great respect; may also indicate that the social status of the speaker is lower than that of the addressee.
***-kun*:** Used most often when referring to boys, this indicates affection or familiarity. Occasionally used by older men among their peers, but it may also be used by anyone referring to a person of lower standing.
***-chan*:** An affectionate honorific indicating familiarity used mostly in reference to girls; also used in reference to cute persons or animals of either gender.
***-senpai*:** A suffix used to address upperclassmen or more experienced coworkers.
***-sensei*:** A respectful term for teachers, artists, or high-level professionals.

Yen conversion: While exchange rates fluctuate daily, a convenient conversion estimation is about ¥100 to 1 USD.

Page 68
Type-3 Chi-Nu: A medium-sized Imperial Japanese Army tank manufactured for use in World War II. The Chi-Nu was equipped with one of the largest guns the Japanese made during the war, though it was never actually used in combat, the units having been held back on the Japanese mainland in the event of an Allied invasion.

Page 161
Waka-gashira: The "young head" of a yakuza organization. Typically the waka-gashira (or waka) is the next in line to inherit the syndicate when the leader (*kumi-cho*) dies or steps down, and he is often responsible for organizing forces and carrying out raids. In this story, Komura is the waka-gashira of the Kakuhoukai yakuza.

Page 162
Ritual sake: Within the yakuza, which often places its members into "family" hierarchies such as father/sons or elder and younger brothers despite no actual blood relationship, the sharing of sake using special formal saucer-like cups called *sakazuki* is a special ritual that binds the drinkers. This practice is not limited to the yakuza, however, as the sakazuki cups are also utilized in religious ceremonies, traditional marriages, formal award ceremonies, and so on.

Page 172
Karito Tate: The titular protagonist of a manga series titled *Yami no Aegis* (Aegis in the Dark). His nickname comes from the legendary shield of the Greek goddess Athena. At this point in *Until Death Do Us Part*, the series becomes a crossover with the characters Karito Tate (whose surname means "shield") from *Yami no Aegis* and the hitman named Jesus from the 1990s hit action series *Jesus*, both written by Kyouichi Nanatsuki and drawn by Yoshihide Fujiwara. The Aegis series is serialized alongside UDDUP in the magazine *Young Gangan*.

Page 229

S.A.T.: Special Assault Team, the Japanese form of SWAT-style tactical law enforcement and counterterrorism squads.

Page 409

Tsundere: An archetype within anime and manga of a character who alternates between outward hostility (*tsun-tsun*) and sappy affection (*dere-dere*). Although this character model is typically a romantic interest, it sure does sound like the average housecat!

UNTIL DEATH DO US PART 6

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